

PlayStation®

Official Magazine - Australia

WORLD EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!

Grand Theft Auto IV

Is it the greatest game ever made?

RED 3 FACTION

An explosive return to the red planet!

HAWX

It's Tom Clancy meets Top Gun!

GOODFELLAS

The inside word on MAFIA II

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW MOTORSTORM 2

All the dirt on this smashing sequel!

METAL GEAR SOLID4

HANDS-ON with the action epic of the year!



Soulcalibur IV - The Sith hits the fan!
Mirror's Edge - Foxy free-running!
Saints Row 2 - Tried and tested!
Destroy All Humans! 3 - Probed!

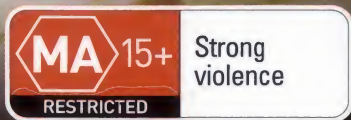


ISSUE 17 JUNE 2008
 AUS \$14.95 NZ \$16.95 inc GST





BECOME JASON BOURNE AND...



PLAYSTATION 3



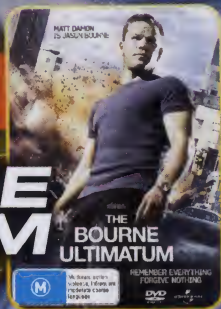
"The Bourne Conspiracy" interactive software © 2008 Vivendi Games, Inc. "The Bourne Identity" characters, events, story and publishing rights © 1980 Estate of Robert Ludlum. All rights reserved. Developed by High Moon Studios, LLC. High Moon Studios and the High Moon Studios logo are registered trademarks of High Moon Studios, LLC. Sierra and the Sierra logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sierra Entertainment, Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. THX and the THX logo are trademarks of THX Ltd. which may be registered in some jurisdictions. All rights reserved. "PlayStation", "PLAYSTATION" and "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox LIVE, and the Xbox logos are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies and are used under license from Microsoft.

ROBERT LUDLUM'S

THE **BOURNE**
CONSPIRACY™

**COLLECTOR'S
EDITION**

INCLUDES
**THE BOURNE
ULTIMATUM**
DVD



TURN INTO THE PERFECT WEAPON.

AVAILABLE 05 JUNE 2008

WWW.BOURNETHEGAME.COM

PRE-ORDER AT **EBGAMES™**

GAME

[JB HI-FI]
ALWAYS CHEAPEST PRICES

Harvey Norman

CONTENTS

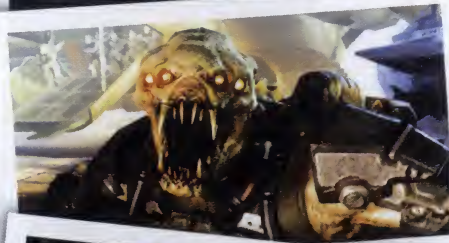


COVER STORY

74 Grand Theft Auto IV

Hot diggity, it's finally here!
The definitive verdict on what could be the greatest game ever!

NEWS



10 BUZZ

Best Christmas ever, new *Call of Duty 4* maps, *BAJA* details, the all new gaming book of records and much, much more...

REVIEW



82

Turning Point:
Fall of Liberty

Churchill is dead, Nazis rule the world and you have to take those suckers DOWN! Our verdict here...

PREVIEW



30

Mirror's Edge

Free-running cranked into a first-person perspective... count us in, baby! We take a look at this groundbreaker!

PREVIEW



32

Saints Row 2

It's basic thuganomics, bitch! Our hands-on preview of THQ's latest contender is in the hizzouse!

CHEATS



92

Tips and
Cheats

War-what? It's been a while, but we're taking it back with our guide to the multiplayer madness of *Warhawk*...

REVIEW

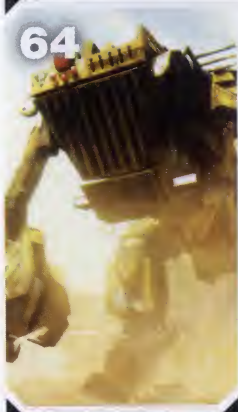


84

Everybody's
Golf: World Tour

We get our golf on with this pick-up-and-play effort. Read our verdict on this sickeningly cute but fun PS3 update.

This Month...



64

Red Faction 3
Get your ass to Mars!



26

Metal Gear?
Part 2 of our feature!



44

MotorStorm 2
Exclusive interview!



58

HAWX
Take to the skies!



Review

80 Army of Two
Can you feel the testosterone? Can you smell it? Can you, er... taste it? Check out our review...



22 WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

Win copies of the Hitman movie, Aliens vs. Predator: Requiem, and more...

30 PREVIEWS

- 30** Mirror's Edge
- 32** Saints Row 2
- 34** Race Driver: GRID
- 34** To End All Wars
- 35** Darksiders: Wrath of War
- 36** Destroy All Human! Path of the Furon
- 37** Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3
- 38** 50 Cent: Blood on the Sand
- 40** WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2009
- 42** Battlefield: Bad Company
- 42** Dead Space
- 43** SBK-08

73 REVIEWS

- 74** Grand Theft Auto IV
- 80** Army of Two
- 82** Turning Point: Fall of Liberty
- 84** Everybody's Golf: World Tour
- 86** The Spiderwick Chronicles
- 86** Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops +
- 87** FlatOut: Head-on
- 87** Coded Arms Contagion

REGULARS

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 006 Editor's letter | 073 Reviews |
| 010 Buzz | 088 Film |
| 018 Competitions | 092 Tips & Cheats |
| 022 Letters | 094 Database |
| 068 Online | 098 Next Issue |

SUBSCRIBE!
CALL 136 116 AND pick up a **FREE binder!**

EDITOR'S LETTER



“...we're home to one of the few people in the world to have finished both *GTAIV* and *MGS4*.”

This was a month like no other. Not only do we have the first review of *Grand Theft Auto IV*, we've got exclusive looks at everything else you could possibly imagine. We've spent countless hours jammed into economy class seats, flown to three continents – all in the search of the best possible content for *OPS*. *Metal Gear Solid 4*? *MotorStorm 2*? *Soulcalibur IV*? *Red Faction 3*? We've got 'em all in what's possibly the heftiest issue of *OPS* yet. In fact, right now we're home to one of the few people in the world who has finished both *GTAIV* and *Metal Gear Solid 4*. Talk to Mark Serrels, the lucky bastard. Yep, we're on the frontlines people.

Unfortunately, I have bad news. For me, mostly – things here will continue to go from strength to strength. 2008 is going to be an absolutely gangbusting year for the PS3, and I can't wait to see how it pans out – but after four years on *OPS2* and *OPS* I'm moving on from the wonderful world of PlayStation. It's been a wild ride, thanks for reading and I'll see you online. I'll be playing *Rock Band* for, say, the next year or so. Cheers.

LUKE REILLY, Acting Editor

PS3 online: **Capt_Flashheart**

“What if I say I'm not like the others?”
– Dave Grohl

How many sick days for *GTAIV*?

MARK SERRELS

Erm, none. (Looks nervously around the office) Being a model employee (wipes sweat from forehead) I will endeavour to come to work everyday. But if I come down with a bizarre case of leprosy, so be it.

Online: **Serrels**



PHILLIP JORGE

Argh!!!! I took all my allocated sick days in the first frickin' month. It seemed like a good idea at the time, and I had just got *COD4*. Time to bring in my evil twin 'Phillipe' to cover for my lazy ass.

Online: **PhiLLipO**



ADAM MATHEW

How many days will I take off to play *GTAIV*? Why exactly are we measuring this in days? Months would make way more sense. By the time I'm done with this bad boy I'll have a ZZ Top beard, for sure.

Online: **YournumsAWESOME**



SQUEEGEE SANTILLIAN

Honestly, I'm banking on none of these guys having too many days off, primarily so they bring the damn thing into the office so I can see what all the fuss is about. How about that, huh? Don't be selfish guys!



JAMES ELLIS

None. I'm worried the economy will slow down due to all the *GTA*-related sickies and we'll plunge into the second Great Depression. I'm doing something more reasonable and am dumping my girlfriend.

Online: **gtfaster49**



DAVE KOZICKI

Three solid weeks should do it. I have a bunker set up for such an occasion. Recliners, a fridge full of beer, a massive supply of junk food, and most importantly, no phone line in or out!

Online: **ko-zee-ii**



PlayStation®
Official Magazine - Australia

EDITORIAL & DESIGN

ACTING EDITOR: Luke Reilly

luke@derwenthoward.com.au

ACTING DEPUTY EDITOR:

Mark Serrels

WRITERS: Dave Kozicki, James Ellis, Toby McCasker, Jonti Davis, Michael Butler, Adam Mathew, Jessica Greene

ART DIRECTOR: Phillip Jorge

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Paul Cook

PUBLISHING & CIRCULATION

MANAGING DIRECTOR:

Nick Cutler

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER:

Ben Mansill

CIRCULATION ENQUIRIES:

(02) 8305 6900

SENIOR CIRC AND MARKETING:

Lenora Daniel

PRODUCTION MANAGER:

Graham Hood

ADVERTISING

COMMERCIAL MANAGER

GAMING: Alex Brereton

alex@derwenthoward.com.au

Phone :: (02) 8305 6909

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR:

Elissa Lawrence

HOW TO CONTACT US:

TEL: (02) 8305 6900

FAX: (02) 8305 6999

EMAIL:

ops@derwenthoward.com.au

Derwent Howard Pty Ltd

P.O. Box 1037

Bondi Junction NSW 1355

WANT TO SUBSCRIBE?: 136 116

(NZ RESIDENTS +61 2 9282 8000)

Fax (02) 9267 4363

www.ops2m.com.au/subs

Or at www.derwenthoward.com.au/subs

MANAGEMENT

DIRECTORS:

Jim Flynn, Nathan Berkley

FINANCE DIRECTOR:

Gary Paroy

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT:

Stuart Harle

Distributed by Network Services Company in Australia and Netlink in NZ. Printed by Webstar.

Software piracy should not be condoned. To report suspicious activity please e-mail piracy@scee.net or alternatively, dial (02) 8266 5111.

For PlayStation 3 technical support and registration queries, please call 1300 365 911. The 'PS' logo and 'PlayStation' are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © Copyright 2001 All rights reserved. Official PlayStation Magazine accepts no responsibility for loss or damage of unsolicited contributions.

© Derwent Howard Pty Ltd 2007. All rights reserved. No articles or images may be reproduced wholly or in part without prior written permission from the publisher.

SHOUT OUTS: Heizy, look after yerself' wumman! :: Leigh and everyone at Rockstar :: Chad Acers :: GASPANIC :: THQ, mini-burgers and the Elephant & Castle :: Hideo Kojima's lair :: Rock Band :: www.edesign101.com.au :: Happy Birthday Camille!

PlayStation 3 and the PS3 Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. and are used under license from Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © 1995-2007 NAMCO BANDAI Games Inc. G-CON™ is a registered trademark of Namco Bandai Games Inc.

IT'S **ORANGE** **PLASTIC** AND IT **RULES** THE **STREETS**

From AK47s to grenade launchers, the street is knee-deep in weapons. Luckily, there's nothing as destructive as the G-CON™3. Equipped with a control pad that allows you to stalk freely around your hunting ground, the G-CON is a weapon you use with both hands and feet to maximise the carnage. Buddy-up with Time Crisis™4 supercops Giorgio Bruno and Evan Bernard and stamp out the mercenary threat. The world is on the brink, it's time to stand up and fight.

M

Moderate
violence

playstation.com.au



Bundle includes G-CON™3

This is living

PLAYSTATION 3

SCREENSHOT OF THE MONTH

YOU JUST GOT SERVED...

Punching people in the gut, and watching as they fly through the air helplessly, promises to be a huge highlight in *Prototype*. But take note of the fact that the military are hunting down Alex Mercer – this seems to be a huge indicator regarding the possible path of the game's storyline. If Alex Mercer isn't a failed military experiment out to take revenge, we'll eat out figurative hat.

GET TO THE (INSERT VEHICLE)

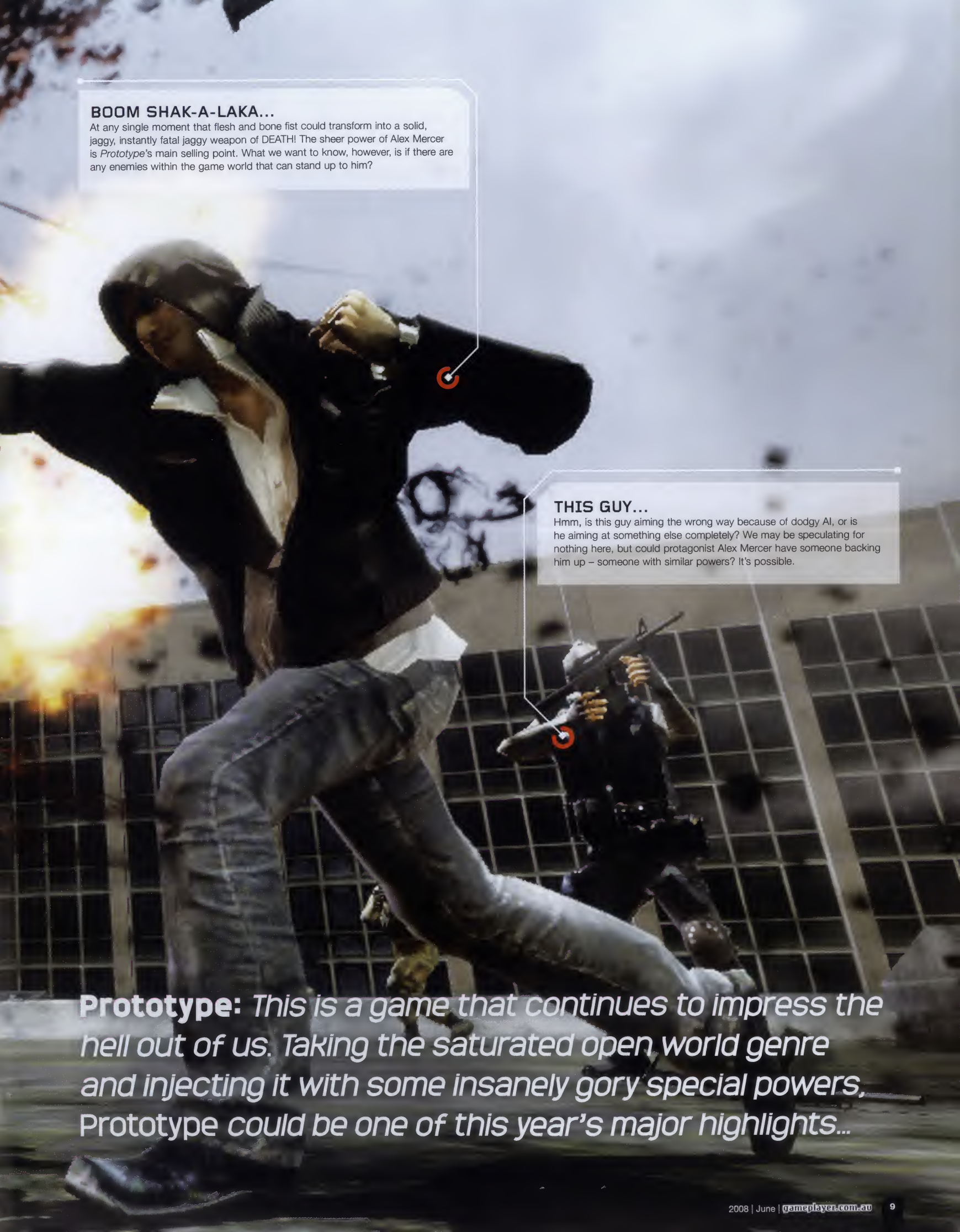
The demo we were shown had Alex Mercer partaking in the odd insanely huge jump onto various types of vehicles. By far the most spectacular, however, was the leap onto the helicopter, which finished up with Alex smashing the window before taking control of the thing!



■ Mmmm... spikey



■ He's going to punch a tank —a frickin tank yall!



BOOM SHAK-A-LAKA...

At any single moment that flesh and bone fist could transform into a solid, jaggy, instantly fatal jaggy weapon of DEATH! The sheer power of Alex Mercer is *Prototype*'s main selling point. What we want to know, however, is if there are any enemies within the game world that can stand up to him?

THIS GUY...

Hmm, is this guy aiming the wrong way because of dodgy AI, or is he aiming at something else completely? We may be speculating for nothing here, but could protagonist Alex Mercer have someone backing him up – someone with similar powers? It's possible.

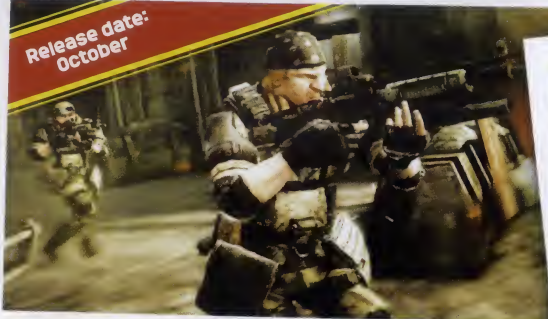
Prototype: *This is a game that continues to impress the hell out of us. Taking the saturated open world genre and injecting it with some insanely gory special powers, Prototype could be one of this year's major highlights...*

Gaming's latest and greatest...

BUZZ

Best Christmas ever, Sonic gets *Unleashed*, new *Call of Duty* maps, new *Guitar Hero* tracks, and much, much more...

Release date:
October



BEST CHRISTMAS EVER?!

Sony lines up the big guns...

Yep, we know what you're thinking: it's only bloody June and they're already talking about Christmas! Well, yes. You may have a point there, but with Sony starting to announce some semi-concrete release dates, holiday season 2008 is looking set to blast last year's seemingly stellar line up into oblivion.

Recently unearthed Sony release schedules have shown that big gun exclusives *LittleBigPlanet* and *Killzone 2* will be making their way to stores around the end of September and the beginning of October, chased by the recently unveiled monstrosity that is *Resistance 2*.

That's not even mentioning *MotorStorm 2*, a game we can reportedly expect sometimes towards the end of the year, or any other exclusives that Sony might have up its sleeves for the coming year.

Everyone, from developers to gamers themselves seem to be predicting that 2008 will be the year of the PS3. Sony seems intent on delivering on that promise.



Release date:
Christmas

Release date:
september



PHOENIX FROM THE FLAMES

Speaking of big reveals, SEGA hasn't confirmed, (but has barely denied) the existence of a new Sonic the Hedgehog game, *Sonic Unleashed*, but screens and gameplay footage of an all-new title starring the spikey one have leaked onto the internet.

The chances of this being the latest Sonic title are extremely high, and despite the fact that his previous outing was a maggot-infested hot mess, we can't help but feel a twinge of excitement, a miniscule hope that maybe this time, Sonic can pull it out the bag for one last grand adventure. *Maybe...*



"Everyone, come see how cool I look!"

IN THIS ENDLESS... TROPICAL PARADISE?

Roughly about a day after the last magazine went to print, we got a little surprise in the mail – a surprise you too will be able to check out if you make your merry way to the PlayStation Store and click 'download'.

We're talking, of course, about the big reveal of *MotorStorm 2* – a reveal that we partially reported on last month, and it turns out that the rumours were right on the money. *MotorStorm 2* is set on a tropical island (apparently mostly inspired by Hawaii) this time round, and does feature interactive vegetation of the lush variety.

Also present and correct is a 16-player online component, four-player splitscreen and a new vehicle class – monster trucks! Check out our exclusive interview with producer Paul Hollywood on page 44.



IT IS YOUR DUTY...

To download these new maps

Call of Duty 4 is currently a marauding war machine, striking fear and terror into the hearts of every other competing online shooter. On the PS3 it's far and away the most played title on the PlayStation Network, and has even managed to topple the 360 totem pole *Halo 3*. Ooh, burn.

In a quest to make their victory absolute, Infinity Ward has currently been hard at work on four new maps for your fragging pleasure. First up is Broadcast, a map expanding upon the section in single player where you assault the TV station in search of Al-Asad. This map retains the basic structure of the campaign level, with some addition features and new sections.

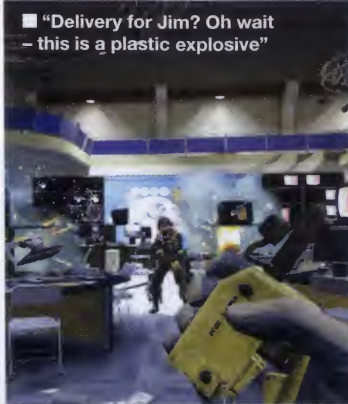
Another map, Creek, is an entirely new creation, set outside any of the campaign scenarios. As far as we can tell Creek is one of the largest maps yet seen in *COD4*, yet features plenty of cover for those afraid of those

pesky camping snipers...

Details on the other two maps are scant, but one titled Chinatown we assume is set in... Chinatown (!) and the other titled Killhouse is apparently very similar to the training level at the beginning of the campaign ("SHOOT THE TAAHGETS!").

We await this upcoming map pack with much salivation.

■ "Delivery for Jim? Oh wait - this is a plastic explosive"



■ "So what am I shooting at here?"
"A tree." "Oh, gotcha."



■ It's pronounced 'Bar-har', not 'Bar-jar'. Or 'Badger'...



■ It rhymes with A-ha - you know, the guys who sung 'Take On Me'



BAJA!

Baja is the latest contender to the *MotorStorm* crown of off-road awesome, entering into a crowded market with the upcoming *MotorStorm 2* and the impressive looking *Pure* on the release schedule for 2008.

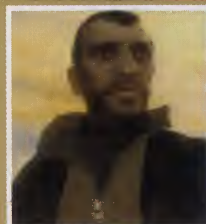
In its favour however is its awesome name (sounding bizarrely like some sort of Bollywood musical) and the fact that it's based on the Baja 1000, a huge off-road endurance race set in Mexico. In much the same way as *Motorstorm*, this race features ATV's, motorcycles, buggies, and all manner of vehicles.

At this stage *Baja* looks like it'll have hard work competing against the competition, but we have high hopes that the game exploits its subject matter expertly to create a more unique driving experience.

WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT...

GTAIV

Read the review to find out why!



Island Paradises

We're going to drive the crap out of them...



Everybody's Golf

Why are the girls sexually attractive?



Sonic

Ye've got a lot of explaining to do...



Fiddy

Your new game better not suck balls...



Movie adaptations

Do us a favour? Leave and never come back!



Games after GTA

You've got a tough act to follow, people...



HOT!

NOT!

INFO NUDGE

Prodding you in the ribs with all the latest newsbites...



HAZE! (AGAIN)

Pinning down a release date has become so vague, and kinda pointless, that it's almost like the butt of some random running joke. First it was December, then it was January, then it was early 2008, then it was Autumn...

etc. Not only that, but we recently

had a May 22 release date unveiled only to have the rug pulled from under again. Now we're back to the vague date of 'May'. Hurry up already!



METAL GEAR PSN

Those pesky Japanese are at it again, with the getting of stuff we don't have yet. What's the deal? This time round the injustice comes in the form of the original *Metal Gear Solid* on the PlayStation

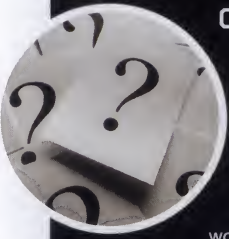
Network. As of now the release is for Japan only, but considering the popularity of the series and the game itself, we'd say it's only a matter of time before we get our grubby virtual mitts on this one...



HEAVENLY...

Ninja Theory, the team behind the almighty *Heavenly Sword*, is apparently gearing up to start production on its next title. That's the good news. The 'bad' news is that this new title will be going multi platform. Not too

much is known about this new title, but studio co-founder (and all-round lovely lady) Nina Kristenson has said that the game will be "a triple-A blockbuster - a game that focuses on our core strengths of story-telling, cinematics and combat."



OOH! VAGUE NEWS!

This is quite possibly the most vague news story ever written, but rumours abound that in addition to Sony's stellar Christmas line-up, there is yet another blockbuster game in the works that Sony is fixin' to unveil at this year's upcoming E3.

We have a couple of suspicions - one of which is that it could be the game we discussed last month: the title that is supposedly going to revolutionise what "consoles are capable of in terms of story-telling..." While you're at it, how about letting us know what the hell happened to *Eight Days* and *The Getaway*, huh?

DUDE LOOKS LIKE OTHER BANDS



Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, nice idea... interesting prospect. But what if you don't like Aerosmith? What if the bulbous lips of Steve Tyler induce vomit and rage? What if you *do* want to miss a thing?

It's an interesting question, and one answered with the fact that there are whole heap of other bands featured in the latest entry of *Guitar Hero*, ranging from bands both post- and pre-Aerosmith.

We already know about The Kinks' and Mott the Hoople's entries into the song list, but we recently got word that Lenny Kravitz, Deep Purple, and (hurray!) The White Stripes will all be making an appearance in *Guitar Hero: Aerosmith*.

The actual songs themselves are yet to be announced, but at this point we're just pleased for a little more variety. Stay tuned.

RECORD BREAKER

When we were informed of the upcoming release of the *Guinness World Records Gamer's Edition*, we were initially sceptical. Yes, gaming has a burgeoning 'speed running' scene, where gamers race to finish the game in record time, and of course *King of Kong* a documentary about the battle for the highest score in the original *Donkey Kong* is currently in the midst of a successful run in theatres. Still, we wondered if anyone would be really interested.

We were, of course, totally wrong - the book is great with an overview of every genre and the records within it, not to mention a cool focus on the growing competitive gaming scene. It's an interesting read crammed full of interesting facts about all your favourite games.

Well worth checking out, and available now.



HAVE YOUR SAY

...and win free subscriptions!

We love you guys/gals! You guys/gals are awesome. We lay awake at night trying to figure out what you want, what you want to see/read/watch/play! But now we need some help. It won't take long.

If you hop over to [http://www.](http://www.gameplayer.com.au/opssurvey)

[gameplayer.com.au/opssurvey](http://www.gameplayer.com.au/opssurvey) we have some simple questions we'd like you to answer, just to help us make a PlayStation magazine more suited to your needs. We feel like we have a handle on what you guys want from the mag - but we could be wrong! Head

over to this webpage and vent, or show the love - it's all up to you...

And there's an added incentive - take part in the survey and you'll go in the draw to win one of five free two year subscriptions! Go on - it'll only take five minutes!

Win a free subscription to OPS by answering a few easy questions!



GEN CON

AUSTRALIA

THE BEST FOUR DAYS IN GAMING!

are you game?

REGISTER ONLINE NOW!

3rd - 6th July 2008

Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre

www.genconoz.com



gameplayer.com.au

Wizards
OF THE COAST

E-VOLUTIONS
GEN CON
THE BEST FOUR DAYS IN E-GAMING!



TOP 10

GAMES CHART

1



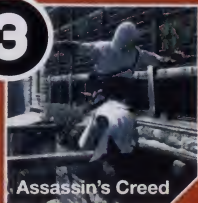
GT5: Prologue

2



Call of Duty 4

3



Assassin's Creed

Rank	Title	Category	Distributor
4	Army of Two	Action	EA
5	Rainbow Six Vegas 2	FPS	Ubisoft
6	Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock	Music	Activision
7	Viking: Battle for Asgard	Action	SEGA
8	SingStar	Music	Sony
9	MX Vs. ATV Untamed	Driving	THQ
10	FIFA 08	Sports	EA

COMING SOON



Format	Title	Category	Distributor
--------	-------	----------	-------------

APRIL

PS3	Ferrari Challenge	Racing	Red Ant
PS3	Grand Theft Auto IV	Action	Rockstar
PS3	HEIST	Action	Atari
PS3	Turning Point: Fall of Liberty	FPS	Atari

MAY

PS3	Haze	FPS	Ubisoft
PS3	Iron Man	Action	Sega
PS2	Alone in the Dark	Horror	Atari
PS2	Silent Hill Origins	Horror	Atari

JUNE

PS3	NFL Tour	Sports	EA
PS3	LEGO Indiana Jones	Adventure	Activision
PS3	Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots	Action	Atari
PS3	Sid Meier's Civilization Revolution	Strategy	2K

2008 TBC

PS3	Tales of the Abyss	Action	TBC
PS3	Battlefield: Bad Company	FPS	EA
PS3	Brothers in Arms Hell's Highway	Tactical FPS	Ubisoft
PS3	Midnight Club: Los Angeles	Racing	Rockstar
PS3	LittleBigPlanet	Action	Sony
PS3	Killzone 2	FPS	Sony
PS3	Resistance 2	FPS	Sony
PS3	MotorStorm 2	Racing	Sony



SQUEEGEE SPACE

Hey everyone, Jessica here. We've been getting a bunch of letters recently asking why I haven't been doing any reviews, well the answer is simple – I just don't have the time! Sorry everyone! But I have a solution that will hopefully please everyone... introducing Squeegie, my latest project! Squeegie is keen as mustard to get into videogames, but has nowhere to start. We're going to put her in the right direction starting next month, by giving her some games to review in this very magazine – giving us a fresh, female perspective on some classics. First off we have a quick interview, to let you get to know our prospective reviewer...

What up girlfriend – welcome to the team. Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

Hey there, my name's Squeegie S. Eldest of six kids, into playing my g-tar, concerts and festivals of the rock/metal persuasion, and am an incredibly desperate movie follower. I'm serious, I'll watch pretty much anything they've got in Blockbuster if I can't afford the cinemas.

So Squeegie (if that is your real name) you've spent the most part of your early life 'sans' gaming – why?

Like most kids, I blame my parents. They just didn't want me to have games "I want you to focus on your school work. Games are for boys," etc, etc. Now look at me, 20-years old, game-less, and with a freaky name like Squeegie – yes, it is my real name. I can produce birth certificates!

All right, so what made you want to delve into the scary world of games now?

The arcade – it's where it all started. I played *House of the Dead IV*, then *Time*

Crisis, basically whatever shoot-em-up I could get my hands on. I sucked, but hey, it was fun. Since then I figured consoles were something worth considering, especially with the likes of *Guitar Hero* (which is harder than the real thing, by the way).

Ah, ye old arcade. So *Guitar Hero* seems to be a good place to start – any other games float your boat?

I'd definitely give *Rock Band* a go (I went through a drumming phase back in high school), but to be honest I've only played very few games. *Dynasty Warriors* was the last one I've played. It was good because there weren't too many buttons to press (no one's explained to me what the hell they're for!) and it was pretty straightforward. I like games that you can be competitive in – like foosball, right Marky?

Mark says to "shut up", and that he "totally let you win". So yeah, stupid *Rock Band* – hurry up and come out already. So yeah, you seem to be more interested in non-traditional game experiences: does a regular control pad, with its ridiculous amount of button-age intimidate you?

Totally! Especially when everyone I play with won't tell me what the buttons do – such a cheap shot. What's wrong wit ya? Scared of losing to a girl?!

We'll sort you out! And finally Squeegie, are you excited about your game reviewing adventure?

Hell yeah! Gimme NOW! (please?)

Tune in next month for Squeegie's first review.



Helicopters, or rotary wing aircraft, are some of the most difficult aircraft to learn to fly. But with Army training and a willingness to excel, you could be flying reconnaissance flights on exercises or deployments, lifting artillery guns and supplies or even dropping Special Forces soldiers into places we can't talk about. To ensure you're up to the challenges you might face, you'll take part in a Flight Screening Program to

"FLYING A BLACKHAWK IS NOT OUT OF THE REACH OF THE ORDINARY PERSON. I'M AN ORDINARY PERSON AND I DID IT."

measure your abilities and see whether you have what it takes. Successful completion of the Flight Screening Program will secure you an **Aviation Cadetship** and a guaranteed place on Pilot's Course once you've completed your Army Officer training at the prestigious

Royal Military College - Duntroon. If you have a passion for aviation, Year 12 English and Advanced Maths, find out more by calling **13 19 01** or visit us now at www.defencejobs.gov.au/army

What's next for our favourite games?

WHERE TO NOW?

GTA/IV... Is there anything this game can't do? Online dating, hanging out with your buddies at the bar, shooting pool... shooting everything in sight, basically this bad boy does everything. So, really, where to now for this world-beating series?



THE PROBLEM	THE SITUATION	FAILED SOLUTIONS	WHAT WOULD GTA DO?	GREAT SUCCESS?
 <p>CURE CANCER</p>	Cancer is a problem, possibly the largest killer facing the human race right now. We've found ways to treat the lil' bastard, but until now a full blown cure has been elusive	Doctors have become pretty damn adept at finding ways to starve cancer, and slowly kill the bugger. Chemotherapy's success rate gets greater each year – but it still makes you bald. Bummer.	Pfft isn't it obvious? Scale the peaks of Mount Zion clad in the robes of Moses demanding God simply eradicate cancer from the history of mankind. If he says no? It would slap him in the face until he changed his mind.	Word.
 <p>STOP GLOBAL WARMING</p>	The world is on the highway to hell, baby. The ice caps are melting, and pretty soon we'll be growing gills and webbed toes like Kevin Costner in <i>Waterworld</i> , and making out with mermaids. Actually that's a lie – we'll all be dead.	Greenpeace, hippies, and Al Gore all failed miserably. Then everyone tried that Earth Hour when everyone turned off electricity for an hour... then went straight back to playing <i>Call of Duty 4</i> with all the lights on, and the air conditioner a-blaizin'.	Hunt down Superman from his home planet of Krypton, drag him down to Earth by his pubic hairs and force him to blow that crazy 'freeze breath' of his until the ice caps are back to normal.	High five!
 <p>END THE IRAQ WAR</p>	The 21st century's greatest joke – minus the punchline. The US and A invade a country to retrieve weaponry that didn't exist – might as well take all that oil while we're here, eh?	Sadly, George Bush's initial instructions to 'shoot the bad guys real good' resulted in massive failure – no doubt aided and abetted by the fact that Donald Rumsfeld couldn't even pee properly, let alone manage a full scale war effort...	Round up a crack special forces team comprised of 80s action stars: Mr T, Sly Stallone, Bruce Willis, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Chuck Norris, and that guy with the beard from last issue. Drop them into the war zone – problem solved.	We support your war of terror!
 <p>MAKE BRITNEY SPEARS HOT AGAIN</p>	The primary object of lust from our teenage years has transmogrified into a bald, acne-ridden, chubby, greasy-haired hick, with a faux British accent. Houston, we clearly have a problem.	Chris Crocker infamously implored that the world "LEAVE BRITNEY ALONE!!!" The world's response? To point and laugh at both Crocker and Spears, who promptly began eating more hotdogs.	What can anyone do? Perhaps GTA would implore that we, as a race, should move onto the next teenage bit of totty, and leave Britney alone – but it's fun to watch a car wreck.	FAIL!
 <p>MAKE MEN PREGNANT</p>	Ever since the heart warming rollercoaster that was <i>Junior</i> , women have pondered upon the logistics of making men carry their own seed (kinda).	Apparently this is possible! By surgically implanted an embryo inside a man's abdomen, with a placenta attached to to an organ such as the bowel, men can theoretically harvest a child!	GTA would save mankind by breaking into the labs of each and every retarded researcher who has been retarded enough to work on this Godless subject, and burn everything to the ground.	YES
 <p>UNLEASH TIME TRAVEL</p>	Since the enlightenment great minds have speculated upon the possibility of time travel. In many ways it's one of the holy grails of modern physics.	Whilst great minds such as Newton and Einstein have speculated on the possibility, only Dr Emmett L. Brown (affectionately known as 'Doc') has succeeded. Sadly he is a fictional character, and not actually real.	Tear the fabric between time and space, fact and fiction, to the point that neither is tangible. In the midst of the chaos it will create a DeLorean so magnificent, that 'Doc' himself would exclaim, "Great Scott, Marty!"	What's mass got to do with it?
 <p>MAKE NUCLEAR FUSION WORK</p>	With resources depleting, the powers of the world are locked in a mad scramble to find an alternative energy source. Nuclear Fusion, which would theoretically result in an endlessly reproductive source of energy, remains elusive.	As of yet scientists have failed to make Nuclear Fusion work as a viable alternative to fossil fuels – the dollar value of maintaining the reactor required is simply not cost efficient enough.	GTAV will be coated in a layer of awesome to such an extent that the game itself will <i>actually</i> work as an infinitely renewable energy source. It will also replace the Sun as the source of all life.	(Simply radiates from the warmth of GTAV)



www.granturismoworld.com



PLAYSTATION Network



POLYPHONY
DIGITAL



HEAD TO HEAD

GRAN TURISMO 5 Prologue™

With the power of the PS3 under the bonnet, GT5 Prologue is our most realistic driving simulation ever. And for the first time ever in Gran Turismo, race online with up to 16 players going head to head. Get a taste of things to come – Gran Turismo 5 Prologue, available now on PLAYSTATION®3.



This is living

PLAYSTATION 3

Gran Turismo 5 Prologue ©2007 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Developed by Polyphony Digital Inc. All rights reserved. "Gran Turismo" and "THE REAL DRIVING SIMULATOR" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "PLAYSTATION" and "PS3" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. KPS1954/73

Your chance to WIN it all...

COMPS

HOW TO ENTER

Send entries to ops@derwenthoward.com.au with the name of the competition in the subject line, or post them to OPS Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355 with the name of the competition CLEARLY MARKED on the envelope. Alternatively, head to www.gameplayer.com.au for details. Include the name of the competition, your name, age, email address, contact number, and more importantly, your full address and postcode! All competitions close on May 25. All competitions are open to residents of Australia and New Zealand.

HIT 'EM WHERE IT HURTS!

The *Hitman* movie is that oft-so-rare thing: a screen adaptation that does the game justice. Timothy Olyphant is perfectly cast as agent 47, the all-killin', all-bald, smashin' assassin – and he pulls off the role nicely. *Hitman* is a well made piece of film that we recommend to fans of the franchise, and fans of gaming in general.

While we did a competition for the *Hitman* movie previously, the movie adaptation of the popular videogame has now made it to DVD, with the Blu-ray version making it to stores on May 28 – so those keen to own a copy should listen up, and listen up good.

We have 10 prize packs to give away, packed to the rafters with *Hitman* goodness, and then some. Here goes (deep breath)... we have a copy of the movie itself (on DVD), a copy of *Hitman: Blood Money* on PS2, a stylin' *Hitman* cap, and some smartly designed *Hitman* tattoos. Good stuff.

Entering the competition is easy. All you have to do is answer one simple question, and send the answer to us marked 'Hitman giveaway' following the instructions above. The 'question' in question? Here goes...

Question: Agent 47 is played by Timothy Olyphant, but who plays the hot piece of stuff opposite him?

- A Charlize Theron
- B Jeremy Irons
- C Olga Kurylenko



VERSUS

In life there are things/objects/people that you just want to watch fight. Women, for example. For some reason it's fun to watch the fairer sex go at it. Children, on the other hand, find joy in making bugs try to eat the hell out of each other – especially the 'when I grow up I want to be a serial killer' kind.

Adults, on the other hand, like to watch fictional monsters from outer space duke it out, hence the existence of *Aliens* vs. *Predator 2: Requiem*. Carrying on the themes from its predecessor, *AvP2: R* has the universe's finest killing the complete crap out of each other real good.

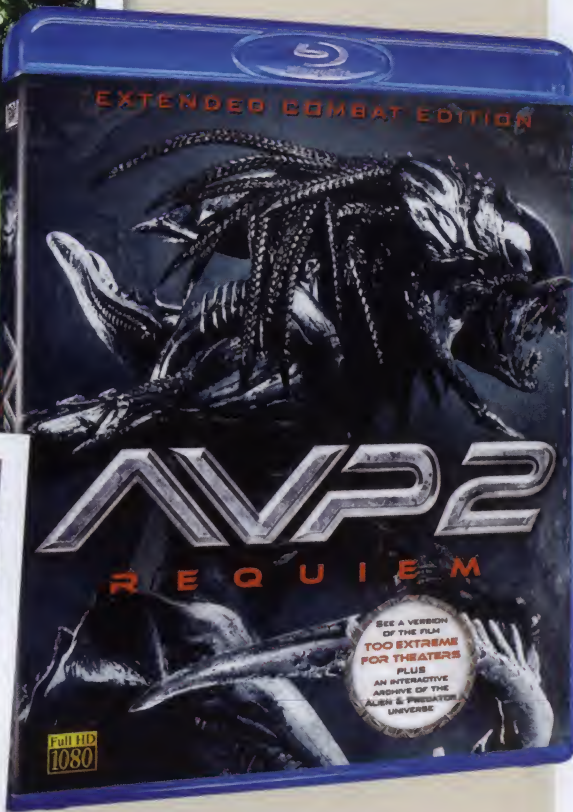
We have some sweet prizes to giveaway, in the form of Blu-rays of the movie, and an awesome handmade Predator figurine (valued at over \$800!). First prize receives the figurine, and a copy of the movie – while the 10 runners up each receive the *AvP: R* Blu-ray.

To enter all you have to do is answer the question below and send the answer to us marked 'AvP2: R giveaway', following the instructions on the opposite page.

Question: Who was the leading man in the first Predator movie?

- A Arnold Schwarzenegger
- B Danny Glover
- C Dame Judi Dench

WIN!



OVER THE RAINBOW

What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas – unless you happen to be an addition to the barnstorming *Rainbow Six* franchise, in which case you can do whatever the hell you damn well please. Thankfully however they've stayed in Vegas... for the most part.

So yes, this is *Rainbow Six Vegas 2*, sequel to the original next gen bar of technical FPS excellence, and a solid move forward for the series. Shoot your friends in multiplayer mode, or hunt down that wily scallywag bad guy who evaded you in the original *Vegas* – the choice is ultimately yours.

We recommend doing both, after entering our competition and winning a copy of the game of course. We have

ten copies of *Rainbow Six Vegas 2* to giveaway, and all that's required to be in the running is an answer to one simple question. Send the answers to us marked 'Vegas 2 giveaway', following the instructions on page 18, and reap the rewards.

Question: "Always bet on Black": which awesome movie did this quote originate from?

- A Casino Royale
- B Ocean's 13
- C Passenger 57

WIN!



SUBSCRIBE NOW AND SAVE BIG!



SUBSCRIBE AND HAVE **OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE**
DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR FOR **LESS!**

12 ISSUES FOR \$99.95

PlayStation®
Official Magazine - Australia

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM



4 WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

- Go to our website:
www.ops2m.com.au/subs
- Call our order hotline (local call):
136 116
(+61 2 9282 8000 FOR NZ RESIDENTS)
(Lines are open 8am-5:30pm Mon-Sat)
And quote M805OPS
- Fill in the form & FREEPOST to:
**Official PlayStation Magazine
Subscriptions**
Reply Paid 4967, Sydney, NSW 2001
- Fax to: (02) 9267 4363



I would like to subscribe to *Official PlayStation Magazine - Australia* starting with the next available issue.

1. YOUR DETAILS

TITLE ☐ MR ☐ MRS ☐ MS ☐ MISS

Name _____

Address _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Email Address _____

Tel no. (inc. area code) _____

☐ Tick if you do not wish to receive information about special promotions from Derwent Howard and carefully selected partners.

2. PLEASE TICK ONE BOX

AUSTRALIA

☐ \$99.95 for 12 issues SAVE \$79.45 OFF COVER PRICE

NEW ZEALAND

☐ AUD \$117.95 for 12 issues SAVE \$61.45 OFF COVER PRICE

INTERNATIONAL

☐ AUD \$159.95 for 12 issues SAVE \$19.45 OFF COVER PRICE

3. METHOD OF PAYMENT

☐ Cheque/Money Order (Aust. only) made payable to ACP Publishing Pty Ltd.

(AUD\$ drawn on an Australian bank account)

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Bankcard

Card No

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Expiry date □□/□□

Card Holder Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

ORDER CODE:

M806OPS

DERWENT  HOWARD

*OFFER ENDS: 29/05/08

Have your say and win big!

LETTERS



■ Splitscreen – we need you

LETTER OF THE MONTH

HE HAD TO SPLIT!

The other day I walked into a games shop, and found that *Burnout Paradise* had finally come out, I looked at the back cover and to my dismay I discovered it was singleplayer only – no multiplayer splitscreen. What the hell!?

I love this game franchise, *Burnout 2* and *Burnout 3* are the best, with the crash junctions, and overall racing. *Burnout Paradise* is excellent, but with the first four games the best part was to sit down with some mates, a few beers and play party mode racing and crashing in splitscreen.

What are they doing for the love of sweet baby Jesus! Why don't they have splitscreen?

Hopefully *MotorStorm 2*, *Race Driver: GRID* and *Gran Turismo 5* all have splitscreen. That's what I am lacking in my PS3 games so far – a killer multiplayer racer, I thought *Burnout* was going to be the one, but sadly I'll have to wait a little while longer. Is it too hard to keep the

splitscreen gaming experience and add the online mode?

Dale Carroll, WA

Dale, ol' buddy ol' bean, thanks for raising this point, thus allowing us to get on our soapbox and rant about an issue that's been bugging the hell out of us for a while now. Games like *Burnout Paradise* (and *Unreal Tournament 3* is another offender) are games that focus on the multiplayer experience – so to eliminate splitscreen is a cardinal offence as far as we're concerned.

We think it's a combination of two things: firstly, developers possibly see splitscreen as irrelevant in the face of online gaming, and secondly developers don't seem to enjoy the downscaling required in order to maintain the frame rate required for multiplayer gaming.

But Dale – both *MotorStorm 2* and *Resistance 2* will no doubt sate your burning desire for splitscreen action.

Whoa, what's with every single letter this month making complete perfect sense? There are many reasons why platformers seem to be on the out these days, and to be honest none of them seem to make that much sense. Publishers think that since shooters are in vogue, they can hop on the bandwagon – and make plenty of moolah atop said bandwagon. In addition, the fact that the average age of gamers is maturing rapidly seems to plant the idea that older gamers won't enjoy a genre traditionally targeted at younger gamers – which again isn't strictly true. Hopefully *LittleBigPlanet* can prove that the genre still has a place in modern gaming.

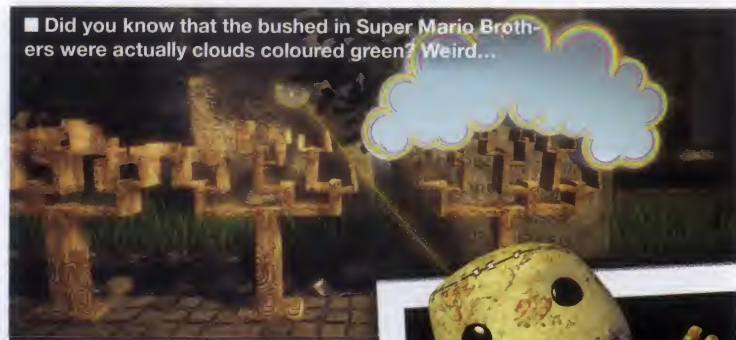
Lance Millan, via email

BOO-URNS

Hey guys. I am looking as forward to *GTAIV* as much as you guys, maybe even more. But when I was reading about it and how awesome its gonna be, I stumbled across the revelation of episodic content... for the FRIGGIN' 360! Why the hell won't we get any extra content? We've been *GTA's* platform of choice more or less since the whole series started – so why are they trying to screw us over? Are we so old that we're being left for that young attractive whore?! We may be an older range of consoles, but we've been able to survive so long because WE'RE SO FRIGGIN' AWESOME! And I sure as hell hope Rockstar won't undermine this, because we've stuck with *GTA* since the franchise began, and if anyone deserves any extra delicious *GTA* gaming, its us!

Sam Fischer

We agree whole-heartedly with the sentiment that PS3 owners deserve the additional content more than 360 owners, but the fact of the matter is that Microsoft dug into Bill Gates private stash and secured some DLC. That being said, it's a moot point as far as we're concerned – we've played the game and the amount of content that has been squeezed into this masterpiece (as well as the incredible multiplayer) will keep you busy until... um, the end of time itself?



■ Did you know that the bushes in *Super Mario Bros.* were actually clouds coloured green? Weird...

PLATFORMERS, WHERE ART THOU?

What has happened to all the platformers? All we have these days is *Ratchet and Clank Future* – the only light-hearted game (of note) available in the sea of adult shooters. Don't get me wrong, this topic isn't intended to criticise the overpopulation of FPS games (I am an FPS fan), but to complain about the distinct lack of platformers.

I can only think of two future platformers for the PS3, one of which isn't fully confirmed. There's *LittleBigPlanet* (which looks absolutely great, but still a while until release), and a possible *Jak 4*, but given the success of *Uncharted*, and Naughty Dog practically confirming *Uncharted 2* is next on the cards, it could be ages before a *Jak 4* is realised.

Is this the end for light-hearted adventures/platformers?

Lance Millan, via email



■ Wrong – this picture fails on so many levels



WINNER!

Letter of the month wins a copy of *Grand Theft Auto IV*! You lucky, lucky bastard!

OPS TALKS TO TOM CLANCY ATOP A BIG PILE OF MONEY

OPS: So Mr. Clancy...

Clancy: I love GOOOOOOOOOLD!
(strokes white cat on lap)

OPS: Ahem. Mr. Clancy, the interview? Can we proceed?

Clancy: Yes. Yes we can.

OPS: So you have become rich via the means of numerous licensed video game IPs, such as *Rainbow Six*, *Splinter Cell*...

Clancy: Sorry, *Splinter what?* What is this *Rainbow Six* you speak of?

OPS: Sorry, what? They're videogames – videogames licensed under your

name. You're a brand name!

Clancy: Video-what? Preposterous. Listen young man, I write, well, used to write, books from the near future, and I haven't heard of anything called 'video games'. How ridiculous.

OPS: Wow, this is awkward.

Clancy: Okay, moving on, let's talk about me for a while

OPS: All right, I guess...

Clancy: I love GOOOOOOOOOLD!

OPS: So let's talk about your line of work – writing books. Any cool new stories in the pipeline?

Clancy: Hahahahahaha! You're hilarious... you're cute!

OPS: Eh? What are you talking about?

Clancy: I haven't written a book in years. People pay *me* to write books for me.

OPS: No wonder you're so bloody rich, you cheeky bastard!

Clancy: I know right!? I love GOOOOOOOOOOOOOLD!

OPS: Tom? Mr. Clancy? Are you alright?

Clancy: GOOOOOOOOOOOOOLD!!!
(explodes into dollar bills)



■ Wuv – don't you just wuv it



YOU LOVE US!

There was a time... a dark time... when I didn't know about *OPS*, and was reading other magazines, which were all right and had some good points, but lacked humour and general awesomeness. Then I moved on to other mags, searching endlessly in vain for the perfect gaming bible. And finally, when I thought all was lost, I saw your magazine on the shelves.

"Proper reviews, great contents, and funny? Surely I'm on crack!" I exclaimed. But I wasn't... well, not crack at least. So since that time I've been reading your magazine for years now and all I have to say is, *OPS*... don't ever change.

Iona, via email

Every now and then Iona, we like to chuck in a letter that talks about how unabashedly amazing we really are. After being told by our respective spouses that we play too many games, and sit around in our underpants all the time, smelling vaguely like cheese, it's nice to get an email that makes it all worthwhile. Thanks heaps Iona!

HARD TIMES... DADDY

Your magazine has gotten me through a bit of a rough spot. Our TV broke a couple of weeks back which means I've been without my PS3. So I've been alternating between staring longing at my import copy of *Burnout* (that arrived the day after the TV broke), playing *MGS: Portable Ops* (it is fantastic game – especially if you ignore the plot) and reading and re-reading your magazine for my fix of PS3 goodness. Like many people I'm psyched about the imminent release of *GT5 Prologue* (it will have to do until the full version comes out) but trying to drive properly using SIXAXIS is pretty difficult. So I am thinking about buying a driving wheel. I would appreciate it a lot if you would do a review of available driving wheels prior to April. Is that too much to ask?

Bowie Owens

Glad to hear we could help get you through those dark days Bowie... life with a PS3 (shudder). Sadly we spotted your email too late to come up with a guide for driving wheels, but we rather like the idea. Check again around *GT5*'s release.

CUTTINGS

Delicious bite-sized letter morsels that are easy to swallow

BLU FOR YOU!

Will we see previously HD exclusive titles released on blu Ray now we've won the battle e.g. *Transformers*?

Alex, via email.

Yes, we're almost 100% sure that movie releases previously exclusive to HD DVD will now be making it's way to Blu-ray, including movies like *The Matrix*, *The Bourne Trilogy*, *King Kong* and yes, *Transformers*.

SHORT STRAWS

Is it just me, or is Australia getting the short straw in gaming?

Jordan, via email.

No Jordan, it isn't just you. Australia is up there with countries like Pakistan and Argen-bloody-tina when it comes to release dates. But thank your lucky stars you don't own a Nintendo – it's even worse on their end. They had to wait almost a year for *Paper Mario*. Pffft, *Paper Mario*.

AWESOME

Resistance 2 is going to be awesome. Everything *Insomniac* does is awesome.

Anonymous, via email.

Word to your mother it's going to be awesome. We 'heart' *Insomniac* with a passion that is, quite frankly, a little unhealthy (considering they're a games development company and not an actual human being).

DREAMS CAN COME TRUE

It is my lifelong dream to be in 'cuttings', can you make it so?

Steven, via email

Yes.



■ Waiting for *GTA* and *MGS4* will do strange things to a man

FEATURE // MGS4

GEARING UP FOR GREAT



NESS

As we're sure you are all aware, there are some rules in life – 'man-rules' that all fellas must follow no matter what. On road trips, for example, the strongest bladder determines toilet stops, not the weakest. Bringing a camera to a buck's night is sacrilege, and never, under any circumstances may two men share the same umbrella. That's just common sense.

PART 2

WORDS: MARK SERRELS

But deep in the Japanese mountains, within the confines of Konami's Blofeld-esque lair, midway through our full playthrough of *Metal Gear Solid 4*, a magical moment occurred – a moment that almost threw us off the course of manliness, forcing us to abandon man-law forever in order to satisfy our own greedy fanboyish desires...

Midway through a marathon eight-hour session with the game, after copious amounts of Diet Coke consumption, we needed to go – badly.

Rushing to the toilet, we let loose with a drainage of Austin Powers proportions. Mid-pee, we heard the ominous click of footsteps approaching, turning around to check the source of said footsteps, our jaw almost

hit the floor, to see the man – Hideo Kojima, on the way to relieve himself in the urinal right next to us.

Man law states that us chaps *cannot* start a conversation mid-pee, but chaps – never in our adult life have we been so tempted to deviate from the true course of 'man', to break from the confines of the law and start jabbering at, nay worshipping, the mind behind one of the greatest franchises in gaming. But we didn't.

Thankfully we regained our composure and let the great man urinate in peace.

And this was just one of the surreal, bizarrely awesome moments that were almost commonplace at NASU's training camp (essentially Konami's hyper modern



■ That's what happens when a Snake meets a chopper... Wait... that sounds a little suspect...



■ "Snake... that moustache really suits you" "Is this the time?! Is this really the time!!"



HIDE-FACTS! PART 1

Apparently the piece of media that influenced Kojima most for *Metal Gear Solid* is *Lady of the Dunes*, a surrealist novel in which a woman is imprisoned in a room for years on end shovelling sand.



take on Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory – we were lucky enough to find a golden ticket). Playing through the entirety of what is arguably 2008's most important game, with Kojima in tow, was possibly the greatest experiences we've had as gaming journalists, a genuine treasure that we feel lucky to describe to you now.

THE WEIGHT OF HISTORY

As you'd expect Hideo Kojima is under a pile of pressure. *Metal Gear Solid 4* is possibly the PlayStation 3's first genuine system-seller – a game designed from the ground up to display firsthand the gap between Sony and their console competition. *Metal Gear Solid 4*'s success is not only expected, it has been demanded: by the publishers, by Sony, and most of all by the fans.

But Kojima's major burden is deeper than that, and you get the sense that the weight of gaming history bears heavy on his shoulders. Via a translator he stated that, in a gaming landscape

where the casual game is king, and developers seem content to rake in the big bucks from this market, Kojima sees *MGS4* as something the 'core gamer' can enjoy.

So *MGS4* has the burden of being not just a game, but a statement, a call to arms for publishers and developers worldwide. Kojima believes that if a big budget, hardcore game like *Guns of the Patriots* can succeed in this casual driven market, then other companies will be more inclined to fund real innovative games, ambitious, epic games for real fans of the medium.

So in a sense Hideo Kojima sees *Metal Gear Solid 4* as a means to save gaming from itself, to refute the dumbed down 'brain age' into which gaming has receded and reclaim gaming for gamers – a lofty goal indeed.

But if any game has the ability to bear this weight of expectation it's *Metal Gear Solid 4*. Having played through the unfinished game we can say, even at this stage, that *MGS4* is the greatest showcase for PS3 hardware, and the best PS3 exclusive to date.

HIDE-FACTS! PART 2

Kojima is apparently frustrated with the lack of space on Blu-ray! During our trip to Japan he reiterated that he was struggling to fit *MGS4* onto dual layer 50GB disc! Come on man! Seriously?



■ When you see Snake running, it's already too late. For you, anyway. Snake will be fine

"So in a sense Kojima sees *Metal Gear Solid 4* as a means to save gaming from itself, to refute the dumbed down 'brain age' into which gaming has receded..."

FLASHBACK!

Partly for new fans, but also to add an element of nostalgia, *Metal Gear Solid 4*'s cut-scenes have an all-new flashback element. So basically anytime a reference is made to something in the previous game a visual cue appears, and if you press the correct button, the game flashes back to the event in question. It brings a tear to thine eye...



■ You're dead. Bye bye

■ "Do you ever think there's something else out there for a henchman?"



SNAKE IN THE GRASS

Despite the fact that some of *Metal Gear Solid 4*'s major advances come in the shape of its controls, the game initially feels familiar – especially for those who messed around with the 3D camera in *MGS3 Subsistence*.

This is not a bad thing. While the new intricacies in control reveal themselves throughout the course of the game, in the beginning players familiar with the series will feel right at home.

And that familiar feeling of complete control, that sense of depth and weight, hasn't dissipated – if anything it has increased exponentially. CQC, the close combat system so revered in *SNAKE EATER*, returns with gusto – and the beauty of this combat system is that you can go as deep as you want with it.

Example. We're stuck between a rock and a hard place – there are two guards approaching from both the front and the rear. We hit the deck quickly, and activate our octocamo automatically; it's working at about 85% – meaning that if either of the guards get too close, the gig is up.

Spinning the 3D camera round, we realise that both guards are on a collision course with our hidden body. What to do? We play dead, but this has little effect as the guards continue on their path, so we draw our tranquilliser gun – things could get messy...

We wait, but the guard in front notices us, and moves in to investigate – it's now or never, and this has to be done perfectly. We line up a headshot, BAM! Perfect hit. The guard drops. His buddy from behind realises something's up, so instinctively we press **A** to turn slickly onto our back and quickly headshot the second guard.

Bugger. We only hit the shoulder, which means the guard has time to call for reinforcements before dropping lifelessly to the floor to catch some Zs – now everyone's after us. We get to our feet and attempt to disarm the first soldier of his weapon with some quick jabs – it works, we steal the guard's gun, but not before another injects us with a short burst of lead from his AK.

Crap. We then grab the disarmed soldier by the neck, and whilst holding

him in our deadly judo grasp, pull out our tranquilliser gun again. This buys us some time. The goons are way more hesitant to open fire, and this gives us the space to line up three perfect headshots for each pursuing guard. Now everyone is dead asleep, besides the poor bastard in our wily clutches – how shall we dispose of this one? Well for the sheer audacity of having approached us first we have no choice but to slit the poor bugger's throat and let him choke in his own blood.

But ultimately it's all about the choices – this whole scenario could have been approached in an almost infinite amount of ways and each, if played well by the player, would have resulted in some modicum of success. Of all the *Metal Gear* games that have come before it, *Guns of the Patriots* easily offers the most options for gamers in terms of approach.

TELLIN' STORIES... OR NOT

And about that storyline... well, after reading through the laundry list of things Konami told us we can't talk

DREBIN...

...Police Squad! Well, not exactly. Drebin is one of the new characters making his debut appearance in *Metal Gear Solid 4*. Looking suspiciously like Wesley Snipes in *Demolition Man*, Drebin is a gun launderer who helps out Snake by providing him with an arsenal that would John Matrix from *Commando* go, "Whoa, enough already". He is responsible for putting the underpants on the monkey. Respect.



HIDE-FACTS! PART 3

Hideo's favourite games of 2008 were *Assassin's Creed* and *Call of Duty 4* – both of which, funnily enough, made our shortlist for Game of the Year in this very magazine. Great minds think alike...

about, it's pretty safe to say that there's only so much we can mention regarding the narrative.

But in many ways it's for the better. You may be salivating at the chops right now for spoiler after spoiler, but we can honestly say that after playing through all the twists and turns of this epic journey, opening the floodgates of the magic yet to come would only cheapen the potentially jaw dropping experience you have in front of you.

There are just so many moments in this epic tale where you will feel the urge to simply stand up and applaud. It's beyond cliché but you'll laugh, you'll recoil in horror, and if you're a big huge girly man/woman you might even shed a tear. Despite the fact that we want to

squeal, we're kinda glad Konami strong-armed us into going all Johnny Tight-Lips on the finer details.

Trust us, you'll thank us later.

ONE MORE TIME...

The real beauty of *Metal Gear Solid 4*, and the real strength of the franchise in general is this... immediately after finishing the game, the first thing we did was start the thing up again on a harder difficulty level. And in the precious few hours we had on our second playthrough, we had more fun than ever, and possibly enjoyed it even more than we did first time round.

The achievement in AI – from the ever-changing battlefield, to the enormous Gekko's tramping across the

desolate landscape – is such that the game evolves to the player's presence, meaning that players can take a number of different approaches to this game, and have a completely different experience by doing so.

Never has a game managed to cram so much detail into a gaming world. The scale of thought and time that has been placed into every single aspect is such that a single playthrough could barely do it justice. On hard, with the difficulty cranked up a notch, the entire game transforms into an eloquent, refined game of hide and seek, with an intensity and balance that

almost renders the rest of console gaming mute.

Metal Gear Solid 4 is the kind of game that forces you to re-evaluate gaming as a medium – it provides you with that sobering perspective. This is what video games are capable of; this is the kind of experience that next gen hardware can provide. This is what it's all about people – and after playing through the entirety of *MGS4*, it's hard to settle for anything less. **JB**



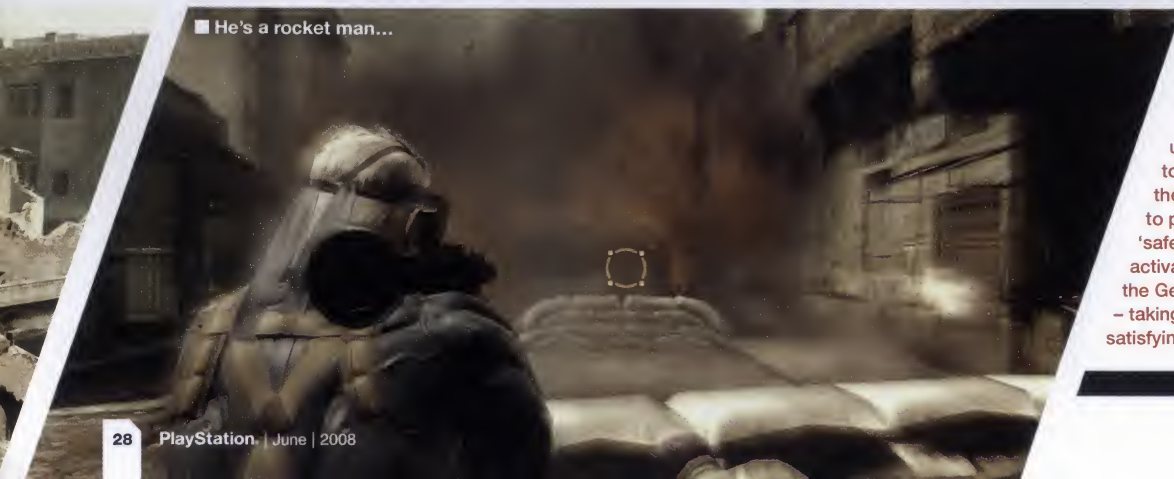
■ "Yep. Hat is still on. Cool"



■ "This one for everyone who answers a question with a question! That's MY job!"



■ "Now call me Sally... do it!"



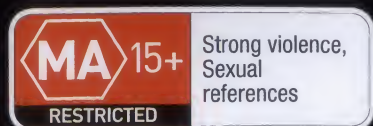
■ He's a rocket man...

GEKKO... (GEKKO)

The Gekko's are AWESOME! Their AI is incredible. At one point we decided to hide upstairs to escape their wily, wiry clutches – to no avail. The buggers actually climbed up the building from the outside, using their legs to push up and cast a sneaky peek into our 'safe' hiding place. In addition, if you happen to activate the 'Solid Eye', the few weak points in the Gekko's defence will be illuminated. Trust us – taking down a Gekko is quite possibly the most satisfying thing EVER.

SLIM & LITE

GOD OF WAR
CHAINS OF OLYMPUS



PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** ACTION
■ **PLAYERS:** 1
■ **RELEASE:** LATE 2008
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** EA
■ **DEVELOPER:** DICE
■ **WEB:** www.dice.se

INFO BYTE

Main character Faith has a backstory that seems to have gone all *Batman* on us. From what we know Faith is of Asian descent, and was forced to grow up on the street after her parents were brutally murdered...



MIRROR'S EDGE

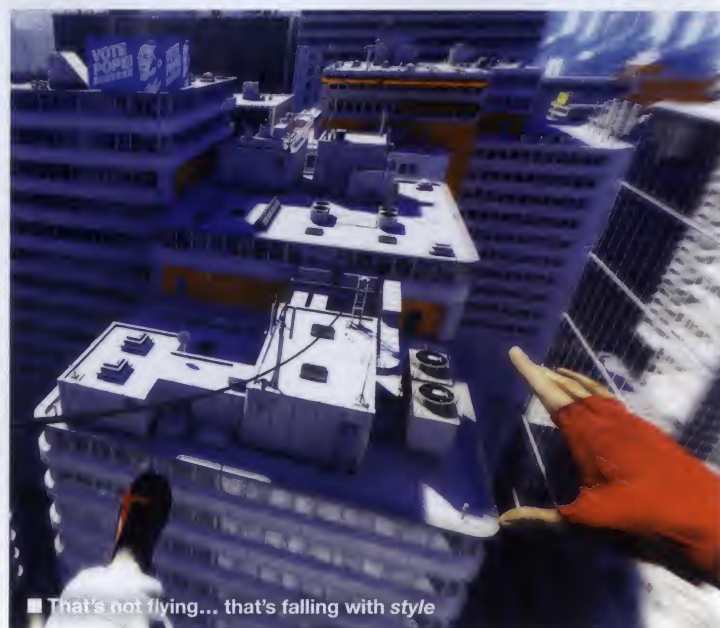
And now for something completely different...

We dig new stuff. Fresh thinking and evolutionary ideas tickle our backs and scratch our fancies. It's why *Mirror's Edge*, the up and coming first-person pioneer from EA's DICE Sweden, has us arching our eyebrows in genuine interest.

Despite the game's name being as appealing as loo splashback, *Mirror's Edge* is out to hammer throw the first-person genre into left field. List every popular first-person convention, in fact, and *Mirror's Edge* stands ready with a thick red marker to cross them out. The

emphasis on shooting and gunplay, for instance – gone. Linear levels – gone too. Don't be fooled into thinking it's some sort of RPG walkabout though. *Mirror's Edge* is set to be an action adventure fiasco that's out to relocate your heart into your mouth. How's it going to do that without chain guns, sticky grenades or floating cerebral bores? By focusing on an element new to the genre – by focusing on momentum.

"What? Momentum? Is this some sort of TV-to-game adaptation of *Yes, I want to be a Gymnast*?" Nope, this is



what happens when a group of fidgety developers want to provide something truly next gen.

Set in a fictional modern day totalitarian city, *Mirror's Edge*'s lead is a young cupcake by the name of Faith. Now Faith, needs plenty of her namesake to undertake her job. Unlike her peers who flip burgers and refill mugacinos all day, Faith is a runner. Like parkour grand masters, runners are aerial couriers who leap around the skyline cityscape. Unfortunately, for reasons not yet disclosed, Faith's sister has been set up

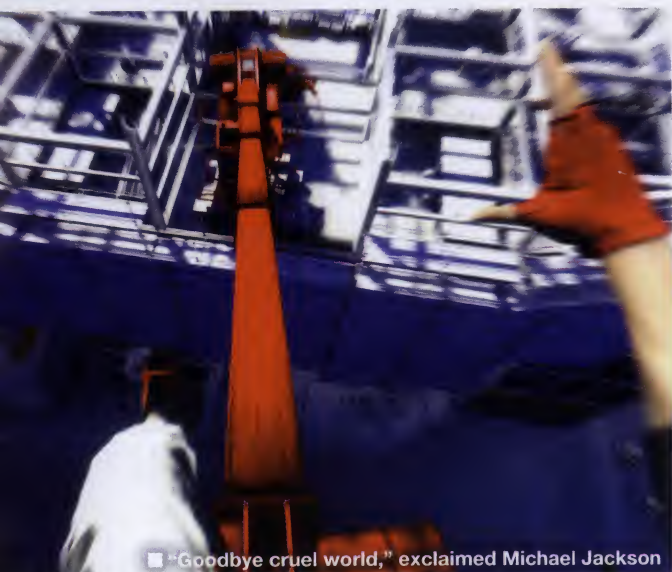
and wrongfully thrown in the slammer and it's up to Faith to use her vertigo-slaying abilities to get her out. Along the way, though, she's set to peeve off a bunch of already angry folk who'll gladly chase her - guns blazing - across rooftops...

And here's where we come to the new-fangled gameplay. See, from DICE's perspective, leaping over a massive gap between two buildings or shimmying up the side of a skyscraper might look cool from a third-person view, but it'll feel absolutely scintillating direct from the character's peepers. Imagine sprinting

MARKS, GET SET... RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!



DICE has also hinted at the possibility that each section will be playable as a sort of race. Along with chase sequences the game will also include a bunch of platform-styled puzzles that will have to be navigated under pressure (apparently they're not going to be tosh like in other FPSs). It's possible there'll be some sort of online leader board to see which runner can get through each part of the level with the quickest time. Do the Reebok and Nike marketing departments know about this?



■ "Goodbye cruel world," exclaimed Michael Jackson



■ In the future... everyone wears gloves



■ Yep, don't really know what to say about this screenshot. Cool, a fire escape!



"...shimmying up the side of a skyscraper might look kinda cool from a third-person view, but it'll feel absolutely scintillating direct from the character's peepers..."

along, swarms of guards behind you, as you duck under pipes, slide over vents then leap over a 80 metre gap while having the freedom to look down at the ground and your flailing feet mid air.

Sounds ballsy to try and pull that off in the traditional first-person view, right? This is where the concept of momentum comes into play. Specifically DICE don't think much of the standard view we've all been privy to since the days of *Doom*. For starters most first-person shooter characters have no legs or arms peripheral vision isn't considered, and the camera rarely moves realistically when you're sprinting about. In *Mirror's Edge* all these issues have been tweaked. You have a whole body and limbs that snap about during moments of intense movement, the camera bobs around the faster you run, and some sense of peripheral vision has been applied. These alterations aren't so they can line the back of the game's box, but rather act as indicators of Faith's momentum. They're

there to put you in the game.

Moving about with this seemingly realistic approach to the first-person view is also promised to be straightforward. There'll be two buttons assigned to dodging stuff as you sprint round like a cat in a pigeon coup: one for leaping over objects and the other for sliding under them. There'll also be a bunch of visual indicators throughout each level that will highlight which objects can be climbed or grappled.

Not that you'll be spending all your time running away from everyone like a Granny purse snatcher. Corner a member of the alternate city's fuzz Gestapo and you'll be able to liberate them of their firearm to dispense some 'old school' justice and blow them to kingdom come. Unfortunately Faith is lacking those magically large bags of ammo that every first-person character slides down the birth canal with, so once she uses up all the weapon's bullets she'll quickly toss the weapon away. Think of guns in *Mirror's Edge* as temporary power ups. Fortunately she's pretty handy when it comes to pulling out ninja kicks and can hold her own in a fist fight, of which, according to DICE, there will be many.

Another pertinent issue is that unlike the cough-spluttered wave of GTA clones that have decided that open-world design is still the new black, *Mirror's Edge* has smartly realised that by offering up a huge go-anywhere city they'd be limiting themselves to grubby visuals. While alternate paths will play a large role, don't expect that you can dash from one side of the city to the other for the hell of it. Nope, expect quality A-to-B design. In our view, this is a big fat chunky thumbs up. *Mirror's Edge* will be using the snazzy Unreal engine so why try to turn the game into a fugly sea of lifeless geometry. Give us design, damn it!

DICE's latest has a lot going for it, but as with all brave ideas there's also a lot that could go wrong. However for the sake of the genre that has seen more than its fair share of sterile first-person outings, we've got our fingers, toes, and genitals crossed. **James Ellis**

BOTTOM LINE

Revolutionary?
Built with Unreal engine
Might fail on it's arse...

OPS is...
Waiting patiently



PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

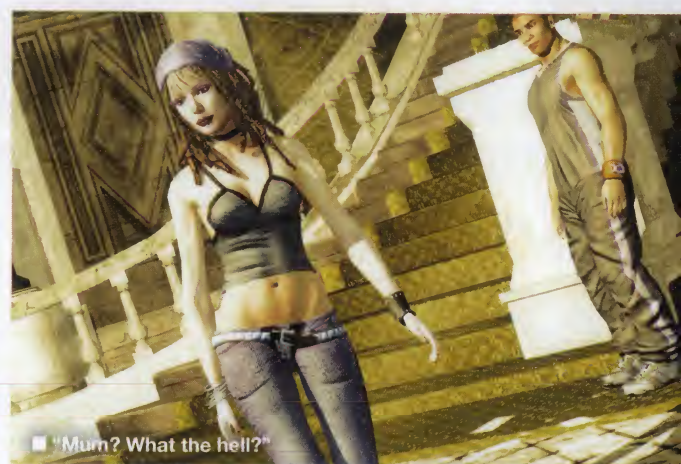
■ **GENRE:** OPEN-WORLD
■ **PLAYERS:** 1-16 (TBC)
■ **RELEASE:** MID 2008
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** THQ
■ **DEVELOPER:** VOLITION
■ **WEB:** www.saintsrow.com



■ "This man died of meat poisoning, and then he was shot 18 times" "Wait a minute, you're not a doctor!" "Call the hospital. Here, use my phone" "That's an iPod! In fact, that's HIS iPod"



■ **Beanies. Gangsta**



■ "Mum? What the hell?"

SAINTS ROW 2

Can these Saints pull off a miracle?

If there's one game that is truly putting its cock on the chopping block this year it's *Saints Row 2*. There are plenty of open-world ditties on the agenda for 2008, although all except *Saints Row 2* really have hooks that place them somewhat outside the scope of the 800-pound *GTAIV* gorilla in the corner. Prototype has super-powers. *Mafia II* is set back in the '50s. *Just Cause 2* has a Spanish James Bond and endless jungle. *Saints Row 2* has thugs. And crime. It's a bold, bold move, and we respect the

effort. But can Volition really follow the *GTA* juggernaut?

It's a tough call. Volition certainly seems to have taken a lot on board since the first *Saints Row* – originally slated to hit PS3 but subsequently shelved to divert resources towards its sequel. Many of the criticisms have been addressed, although the more cynical and savvy will identify a lot of these changes as things that were successfully done back as far as *GTA: Vice City*. Flying vehicles, motorcycles, satchel charges, chainsaws

– they're not exactly new, but who cares as long as they're fun, right? True, mostly. You can't criticise a game of taking itself too seriously while a policewoman with a can of pepper spray is chasing you through white-trash central.

As far as we can see at this stage, *Saints Row* does have a single true trump card up its sleeve. That card? Co-op play for the duration of the game. We've already seen that robust co-op play can take an otherwise stock-standard game and give it the boost it needs to remain



INFO BYTE

Saints Row 2 will allow you to take human shields, although we do worry about the balance of black humour and violence. If it's not funny enough, then it's just a bit sick.

compelling, and above all fun, enough for you and a mate to see it out to the closing credits. *Army of Two*, a paint-by-numbers shooter if there ever was one, is a decent two-player frag-fest thanks to some competent co-op.

Saints Row 2 will allow for all manner of two-player opportunities. Many of which are extensions of the original open-world multiplayer pioneered in a limited, but admiral, capacity in *GTA: San Andreas*. Back-up hombres, for instance, will be able to fire from attack choppers while the main man pilots the bird, and so on and so forth. It'll also allow for slightly more strategy when it comes to firefights – the ability to have a friend provide sniper cover as you head into the fray is neat.

Our hands-on did leave us a little

lukewarm, particularly with the incredible work Volition is doing with *Red Faction: Guerrilla*, but we can see potential. The character customisation should prove a real hit. You can modify everything about your on-screen avatar, from your sex to the way you swagger. We created a fat Hispanic bloke with a pimp lean in no time, but it could've just as easily been a 50-year-old woman in a bikini. Volition helpfully saw fit to equip us with a sack full of weapons and infinite ammo, which we quickly put to good use decimating the trailer park we began in. The controls seem functional, and although the vehicle physics seem a little stiff the helicopter was surprisingly easy to control. And quick too. We had fun in the chopper.

More soon. ➔ **Luke Reilly**

■ She always goes all the way on the first date



■ Matching outfit and Sea-Doo. Lame



■ Choppers like this one are one the new drawcards

UNCLE GARRY

We guess to prove he'll do anything for a paycheck these days, Gary Busey (yes, *that* Gary Busey) has recorded a number of promotional teasers for the new elements of *Saints Row 2*. We think he's gone crazy. You thought it was odd seeing him in a dress in *Under Siege*, wait until you see him laughing like an evil scientist as one of the on-screen characters teabags a fallen foe. Gary Busey videogame commercials – early contender for oddity of the year.



BOTTOM LINE

- Co-op for the whole game
- Tons of new additions
- Vehicle handling

OPS is...

Well, playing *GTA*



The world's biggest sing off just keeps getting bigger.

Create your ideal party playlist with SingStar on PLAYSTATION®3 – with over 160 songs to download from the online SingStore™* and new tracks added fortnightly, you'll find something to bring out the SingStar in you.

*Broadband connection required for online features.

inside everyone there's a SingStar

singstargame.com



PG

Mild sexual references

PLAYSTATION 3

"PS" and "PLAYSTATION" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. All rights reserved. "This is Living" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved. SingStar ©2007 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by SCE London Studio. SingStar, My SingStar and SingStore are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved. K8731940 07/07/07

PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** RACING
■ **PLAYERS:** 1-12
■ **RELEASE:** MID 2008
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ATARI
■ **DEVELOPER:** CODEMASTERS
■ **WEB:** www.racedrivergrid.com



gel with the game. It's really a case of two things. One – appealing to the US market means selling-out to a significant degree. Flashy, shallow shite seems to do well with fickle Americans. Two – the crew at Codemasters appear to believe they've found a way to have their cake and eat it to. Keep the ruthless and spectacular crashes to appease the hardcore fans of the last three iterations of the *Race Driver* series, but dumb it down enough so gamers who don't really want to be punished for their mistakes will hop on board. Unfortunately, taking away the risk of knocking yourself out of a race entirely removes one of the key elements the *Race Driver* series previously had over its competitors. The fact that one mistake could cost you so dearly made the racing a tense, white-knuckle affair – just like the real thing. Allowing 'do-overs' spoils that. It needs tweaking or jettisoning. The handling doesn't quite feel spot-on either – the cars feel a shade light. We don't hate it, it's just different. **— Luke Reilly**

RACE DRIVER: GRID

We're going back in time!

We've got our paws on a robust build of *Race Driver: GRID* in OPS Towers, a game we're a little hot and cold about. The good? It looks great. It's not in the same league as *GT5: Prologue*, but we're yet to see a racer that is. Still, the cars are satisfyingly sharp, the track detail is nice and the special effects and damage impress. It sounds rad too – not surprising considering *Colin McRae: DIRT* featured

up to 96 active sound effects per car at any one time. Bounding over the San Francisco hills resulted in a symphony of squeaks, thunks and crunches.

One of the things we were most interested in exploring was the flashback feature, which gives players the ability to 'rewind' the last few seconds of gameplay – primarily to be used after terminal crashes. Honestly? This lowest common denominator stuff doesn't really



BOTTOM LINE

- ✓ Nice presentation
- ✓ Good sense of speed
- ✗ Flashback is dumb

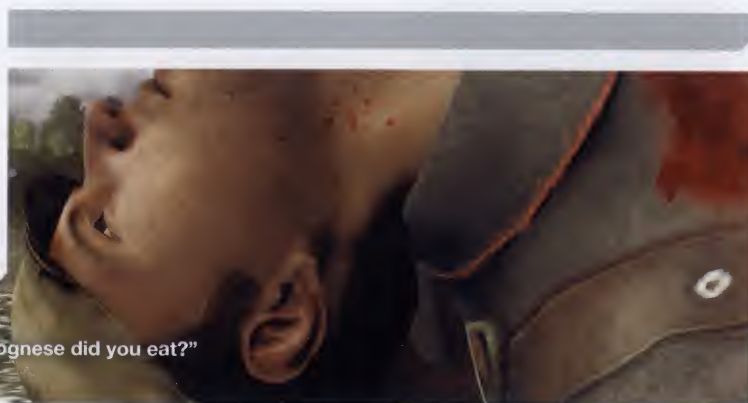
OPS is...
Slightly sceptical



PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER
■ **PLAYERS:** TBA
■ **RELEASE:** LATE 2008
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** TBA
■ **DEVELOPER:** KUJU
■ **WEB:** www.kuju.com

■ "Geeze Sarge, just how much Bolognese did you eat?"
"A lot Private... I need to lie down"



TO END ALL WARS

The sun's shining down on these green fields of France...

Backlash against WWII shooters is still mounting somewhat.

Unfortunately there are plenty of gamers out there who feel they are the barometer against which all game concepts should be measured, and now they're over WWII shooters, they assume we're all over them – they're, "too, like, old". This, of course, ignores the fact we can count the WWII shooters due this year on one hand, (and, apparently, the eight billion current and upcoming FPS titles set in the future are immune from accusations of over-saturation). Our point is the self-appointed fun-police are going to have kittens when they get a load of

Kuju's latest. The UK developer has set its shooter a further 30 years into the past, in World War I. The nerve!

Ignoring completely the eye rolling of the laser-brigade, *To End All Wars* is quite an intriguing title. WWI has generally been fodder for PC flight-sims and little else – we're more than a little interested to see just how Kuju can tackle the brutal and unique nature of WWI combat and translate it into an exciting, authentic and, hopefully, profoundly moving digital experience.

As you'd expect, many a trip to the fields of France and Belgium has gone into faithfully recreating the battlefields

of the Great War, and the team was given access to the nearly 100-year-old equipment to ensure accuracy.

To End All Wars appears to take a distinctly *Call of Duty* approach to its warfare – you're one of many soldiers fighting towards a common goal, not a one-man-army. The levels themselves are said to be huge, and there'll be vehicles available to get around them if necessary (most of which seem to be vintage armoured cars).

The big question? Can we expect homage to the valiant struggle of the ANZACS at Gallipoli? We'll get back to you. **— Luke Reilly**



BOTTOM LINE

- ✓ Bold, unique setting
- ✓ Big levels
- ✗ Will it appeal?

OPS is...
Digging In



PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

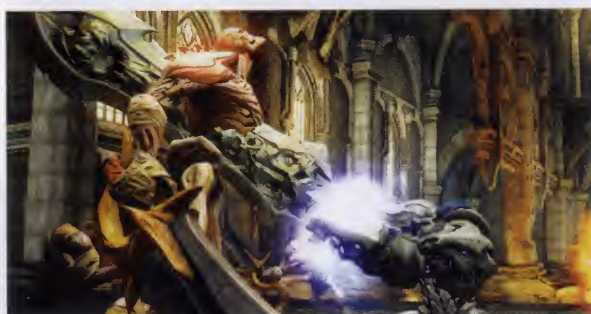
■ **GENRE:** ACTION
■ **PLAYERS:** 1
■ **RELEASE:** EARLY 2009
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** THQ
■ **DEVELOPER:** VIGIL GAMES
■ **WEB:** www.darksidersvideogame.com



■ "How's my sword? Stabby enough for ya?"



■ Resurrecting the guy who played Sloth in *The Goonies* – bad idea



■ Chicken on a stick: this is how it's served in the post-apocalypse

DARKSIDERS: WRATH OF WAR

And there went forth a horse that was red...

The last game based on the Bible, that we know anyway, was a quiz game that we're pretty certain never made it to these shores. All we really remember about the Bible is the fact there were no dinosaurs in it, and the glare from the teacher when we asked why. Parents give kids the same glare when they find out the truth about Santa and their younger siblings are about. At any rate, this is all probably a little misleading. *Darksiders: Wrath of War* isn't really based that much on the Bible – just a verse or two. From Revelations, specifically. The Armageddon stuff.

Penned by legendary comic book dude Joe Madureira (*X-Men*, *The Ultimates*), *Darksiders* is set in a post-apocalyptic, demon-infested Earth world where the end of days came sooner than everyone thought, and didn't exactly go as planned. The war between angels and demons went to the bad guys, but the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse have been betrayed

by their master. One of them, War, is brought before The Charred Council, a neutral spiritual body that oversees the actions of Heaven and Hell and is subsequently stripped of his powers and sent to Earth to sort it all out.

We saw a short demo of *Darksiders* at THQ Gamer's Day and were treated to some distinctly *Devil May Cry*/*God of War* shooting and slashing shenanigans. The game itself is apparently split between a trashed metropolis and the Abyss, which is supposed to be a bit like Hell. Once it's all available, the world will be seamless. We watched War run around in the former, stabbing hordes of lurching humanoid demons – the Fallen. Now and then you'd see an angel battling a demon (the war isn't quite over) and come across a large boss encounter (War disarmed one huge, horned baddie quite literally – by chopping off his arms).

Looks tasty, but it's a longway off. **— Luke Reilly**

A HORSE IS A HORSE

You'll eventually be reunited with your horse, Ruin. This otherworldly steed gives War a host of new abilities to use, including trampling enemies and crossing dangerous areas of the world without necessarily, you know, dying. We watched War take on a giant sandworm in the Ashlands – something only possible with the help of Ruin. At a few points the huge creature knocked War from the saddle but Ruin's supernatural abilities allow (him? It?) to be summoned out of thin air for a quick rescue.

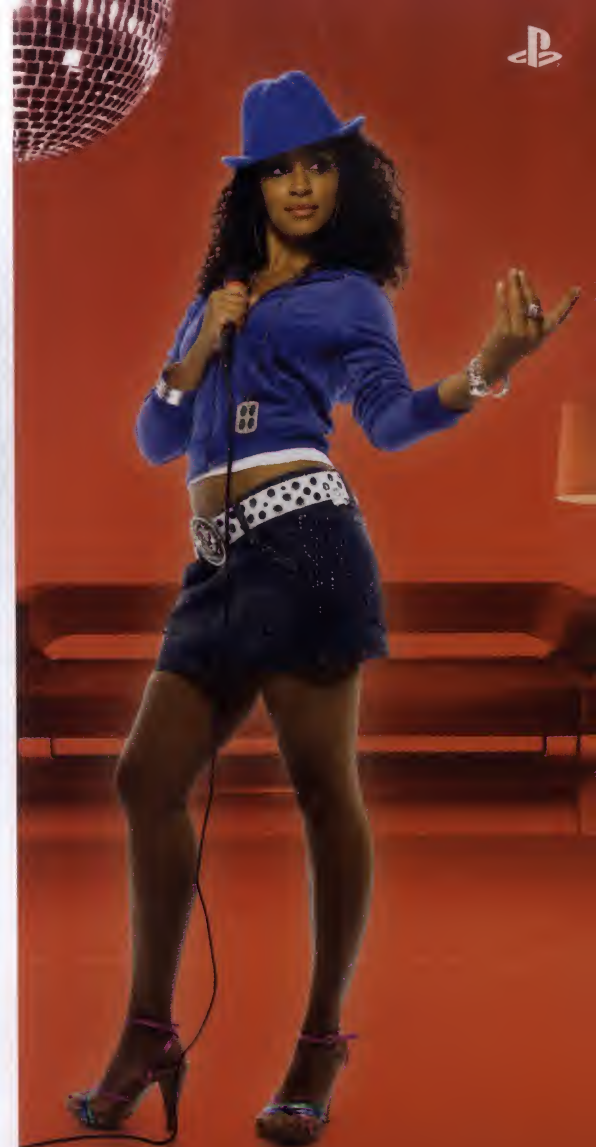


BOTTOM LINE

- Great art direction
- Cool lead
- Needs a bigger hook

OPS is...

Praying



The world's biggest sing off just keeps getting bigger.

With My SingStar Online*, the fun continues long after your very last party guest has gone home. Plug in the PLAYSTATION®Eye camera to capture performance videos and photos that you can upload and re-live with friends...or if you're game, share them with the world and let them rate your SingStyle!

*Broadband connection required for online features.

inside everyone there's a SingStar

singstargame.com



PG

Mild sexual references

PLAYSTATION 3

"PS" and "PLAYSTATION" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "This is Living" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved. SingStar © 2007 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by SCE London Studio. SingStar, My SingStar and SingStar are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved. KPSM/PSM/PSM

PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** ACTION
■ **PLAYERS:** 1-2 (TBC)
■ **RELEASE:** LATE 2008
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** THQ
■ **DEVELOPER:** SANDBLAST GAMES
■ **WEB:** www.destroyallhumansgame.com



INFO BYTE

Veteran voice actors J. Grant Albrecht and Richard Horvitz will reprise their roles as Cryptosporidium and Orthopox respectively.

DESTROY ALL HUMANS! PATH OF THE FURON

Humans take a beating... again

Games swapping developers is usually a tough thing to manage. Neversoft did a good job with *Guitar Hero III*, but the series lost a little of its magic with distractions like *Battle Mode*. Traveller's Tales may make a mean *LEGO* game, but its work on the *Crash Bandicoot* series isn't a patch on that of Naughty Dog. It's with this in mind we've been a tad wary of *Path of the Furon*, but an eyes-on at THQ's Gamer's Day has allayed some of our concerns.

The premise is fairly simple. It's now the '70s and, flushed with some extra cash, Crypto has opened a family-friendly casino. Naturally, problems arise – one from the American Mafia and the other from his home world. Both of these have the potential to destroy him, so he sets about taking care of them.

To Sandblast Game's credit,

the developer hasn't simply taken Pandemic's cult fave, given it a next gen spit-and-polish and unleashed it on an unsuspecting public. Crypto has a glut of new weapons and abilities that expand the core experience of the *Destroy All Humans!* series significantly.

The Venus Human Trap is a giant plant-monster that can be summoned to feast on humans and objects. It feeds itself with its giant tentacles, although Crypto can manually feed it by grabbing humans and depositing them near the beast. The more it eats, the bigger it gets. The Black Hole Gun is fairly self-explanatory, although it's quite spectacular – sucking everything within range into a wormhole. The Super Baller fires a bouncing ball, trailing a rainbow, which pins itself to humans and objects and bounces around the area.

Crypto's saucer now boasts the ability to change altitude and engage enemies in the air. It also features a few new gadgets, including homing drones that can actually punch through buildings and an improved Abducto-beam that sucks up pesky human scum like crumbs in a dustbuster.

It's Crypto's new telekinetic (PK) abilities, however, that impress most – particularly Temporal Fist. Temporal Fist allows you to freeze time for a short period and rearrange your surroundings how you see fit. Say a tank has just fired a shell at you – activate Temporal Fist, grab the shell and turn it around. When time restarts the tank will be destroyed by its own ordinance! Neat.

The visuals were a shade below what we expected and we didn't see any missions but it certainly looks like a hoot.

More as we get it. **— Luke Reilly**

THE CITY IS YOUR CANVAS

As an aside, the damage you can do to the game's environments from your saucer is persistent, which opens up all kinds of immature possibilities. You can, for instance, burn a giant penis onto the side of a building with your saucer's death ray. Of course, you could just make do with a great big smiley face, or your name. Keep firing and eventually you'll burn through enough of the structure to bring the whole thing toppling to the ground. Right now it kinda looks like a big curtain falling down, but Sandblast may give it a tweak.



BOTTOM LINE

✓ Cool destruction
✓ Improved anal probe
✓ Workmanlike visuals

OPS is...

Hoping for the best





■ Vroom, VROOM! Kablast, wheeee, etc.



COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT 3

Better than melting ants with a magnifying glass

Let's face it: real-time strategy games allow grown men to indulge in the sort of action-figure fantasies they crashed, boomed, and bammed to back when they thought all girls were lepers. You take your army of little guys, place them in their dinky vehicles of death, then melt the other poor bastards into oblivion. It's dorky as all hell, but who gives a damn, right?

Thing is, if there was a RTS game that has been largely de-dorkified it's the *Red Alert* series. The second franchise from the Command and Conquer juggernaut, it's known for its arcade-styled pace, gumball cut-scenes, and being more addictive than Pringles.

Following news that *World in Conflict* is headed to the mouse-friendly PS3, EA have announced that *C&C: Red Alert 3* will also be firming up the genre on Sony's slick black boiler.

Big on the agenda is a burly co-op campaign mode. While players could team up against the computer in previous

Red Alert games on PC, *Red Alert 3* will feature a host of close-knit teamwork strategies players will have to use to get through the campaign.

Story-wise, the Allies and Soviet powers are set to return for World War III but this time they'll be battling in an alternate timeline with a new menace thrown into the melee – the hi-tech Empire of the Rising Sun.

We're excited and not afraid to admit it, damn it! **James Ellis**

BOTTOM LINE

- Easy to pick up
- Love the *Red Alert* universe
- Lots of RTS competition

OPS is...

observing happily

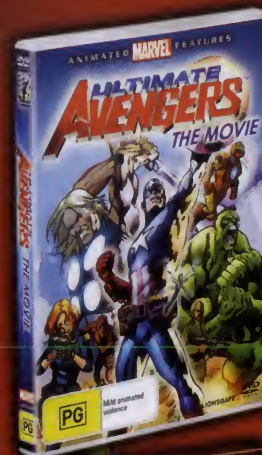


PS3 PS2 PSP
PREVIEW

- **GENRE:** REAL-TIME STRATEGY
- **PLAYERS:** TBC
- **RELEASE:** TBA 2008
- **DISTRIBUTOR:** EA
- **DEVELOPER:** EA LOS ANGELES
- **WEB:** www.ea.com/redalert

ANIMATED **MARVEL** FEATURES

THE FIRST-EVER ANIMATED FULL LENGTH MOVIES FROM MARVEL



These visually stunning animated films feature the best superheros including Iron Man, Captain America, Thor, and The Incredible Hulk, as well as the mystical Doctor Strange.

Loaded with special features that delight, including:

- ★ The hilarious "Which Avenger Are You?" DVD-ROM game
- ★ "The Ultimate Voice Talent Search" Featurette
- ★ The Hall of Iron Man Armour
- ★ First look at Avengers Reborn - the next installment in the Marvel franchise
- ★ Trivia Track

AVAILABLE TO BUY FROM
APRIL 30 ON DVD AND Blu-ray Disc

PG Parental guidance recommended

M Recommended for mature audiences

LIONSGATE™ MARVEL

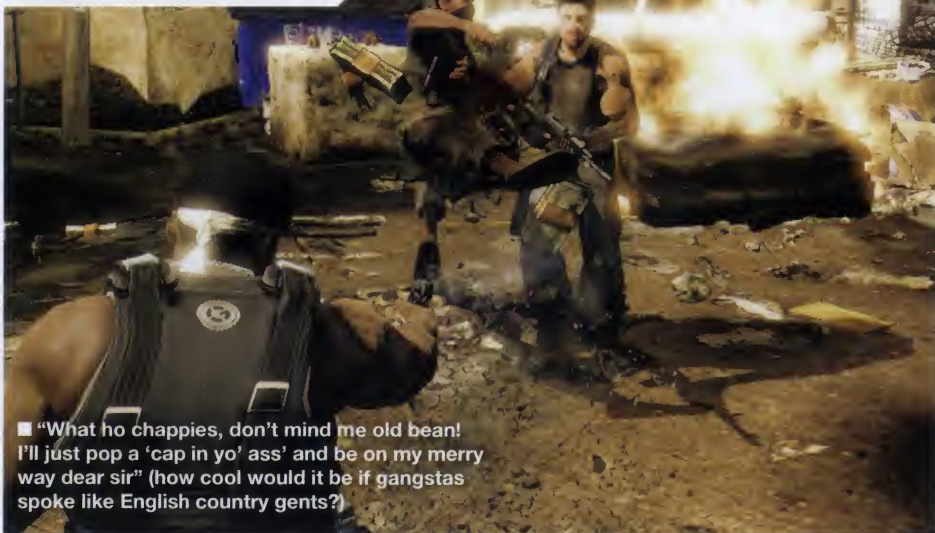
*Ultimate Avengers: The Movie & Ultimate Avengers 2 are available on Blu-ray. The Incredible Hulk and Doctor Strange are not available on Blu-ray at this time. Future release is planned. TM & © 2007 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. www.marvel.com Produced under license from Marvel Characters, Inc. LIONSGATE: TM & © 2007 Lions Gate Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. © 2008 Layout and Design Sony Pictures Home Entertainment Australia. All Rights Reserved.

PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** ACTION
■ **PLAYERS:** 1-TBC
■ **RELEASE:** LATE 2008
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** SIERRA
■ **DEVELOPER:** SWORDFISH STUDIOS
■ **WEB:** www.sierra.com

INFO BYTE

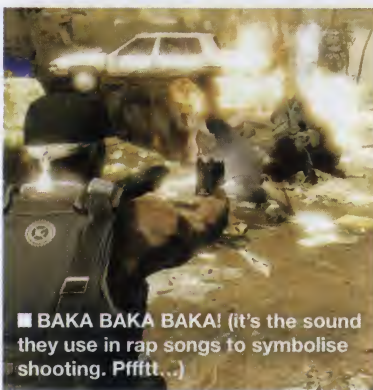
Swordfish Studios recently released *World In Conflict*, and was behind the dusty old PS2 classic, *Cold Winter*.



■ "What ho chappies, don't mind me old bean! I'll just pop a 'cap in yo' ass' and be on my merry way dear sir" (how cool would it be if gangstas spoke like English country gents?)



■ "Take it back! Yayo's album was the bomb diggy yo! TAKE IT BACK!"



■ BAKA BAKA BAKA! (it's the sound they use in rap songs to symbolise shooting. Pffft...)



■ Words at the end of Fiddy Cent's rhyming couplets: bud... club... dub... rub... slug... rug... bug

50 CENT: BLOOD ON THE SAND

Drop lead on fools trying to get your paper

After the less than shining performance of 50 Cent's previous outings, you could say we had our doubts about this sequel. Homeboy was no-where near as bulletproof as the title suggested. To be honest, that mofo was perforated by so many harsh reviews, it was starting to look like Swiss cheese, yo. Sure, the predecessors sold well, but a kick-arse experience they were not. Some would argue it's a quick cash in, but a clothing line would rake in more ends than a video game right? Just ask Diddy/Puffy/Sean Combs/whatever.

We prefer to think of it as Sierra's chance to come correct. It's still a little risky (kinda like turning up to the Source Awards sans Kevlar). Guess it's time to see how bulletproof our dog really is, and what sort of return you can expect to get

off a fifty-cent investment...

Here's the low down. There's a new player in town. He's been scoping you out and is now trying to jack you for your grip. Now Fiddy don't take that mess lying down. We all know he spits hot fire on the mic, now it's time to spit some hot lead on their punk asses and get back that paper, ya feel us? Come on, get with the Ebonics now, peeps!

Protecting yo ass(ets) is what it's all about, and giving this wannabe gangsta and his crew of punk beeyotches a little payback don't hurt none either. It's time to stay rich...or die tryin'.

Swordfish Studios isn't holding anything back in this juiced-up follow-up - it's promising some full-on intense action. Right off the bat, you've got drop in/drop out co-operative play, and we love

that (check out G...G..G..G.G.G...G-UNIT!!!). In fact, it should be a staple for any action game in our humble opinion. There's a whole new range of interactive counter kills to take advantage of, as well as Fiddy getting behind the wheel for some crazy running and gunning, a first for the series. Now, if that ain't enough, you can take off into the wild blue yonder and get some crazy aerial combat on. This bad boy's got all that, and a bag o' potato chips brother!

50 Cent: Blood on the Sand is looking surprisingly cool. The graphics are seriously tight, the hardcore in your face action sounds sweet, and you've got a host of bonus, previously unreleased 50 Cent and G-Unit tracks bumping in the background. Call us crazy, but this is looking kinda pimped. **Dave Kozicki**

G...G..G..G.G.G...G-UNIT!!!

Not only do you get to pop some caps as Fiddy Cent, but you get to wreck shop as G-Unit as well. Take your pick from Lloyd Banks, DJ Whoo Kid or Tony Yayo. We're hoping the next step will be multiplayer death match where you can face off against Dre and Eminem. Maybe bring Cube, Ren and Easy-E out of retirement (or the grave, as the case may be), with team leaders 2Pac and Biggie. Then we could finally squash that East Coast - West Coast bullshit! Fo rizz-eal!!



BOTTOM LINE

- ➡ G-Unit and guns
- ➡ Drop in co-op
- ➡ Remember the last one?

OPS is...
Hedging its bets





PC MSN USB

3
inch tall
figure!



i-Buddy comes to life when you get a new MSN message! It knows if the message is happy or sad or mad, and emotes with irresistible robotic twists and colours, flapping its wings to warn you in advance what's incoming! i-Buddy is fun, funny and oh so cute - **ONLY \$34.95!**



Someone sends you a message...



i-buddy detects the emotions in the message...



Appropriate actions will be played!

Bring your msn experience to a whole new level!

Buy i-Buddy now!

www.gadgetzone.com.au/i-buddy



PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** WRESTLING
■ **PLAYERS:** TBC
■ **RELEASE:** LATE 2008
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** THQ
■ **DEVELOPER:** YUKES
■ **WEB:** www.thq.com



■ "Ah wish ah knew how to quit you.
Actually how about I just choke you to death"

WHY WORRY?

What about that 'other' wrestling game due out this year, *TNA iMPACT*? Well, the word is nobody's particularly worried. We hope they've got good reason. We dare say nobody was too worried at Neversoft about *SKATE* until it showed up on their doorstep and thoroughly trounced the stalled *Tony Hawk's* series in one fell swoop! We hope pride comes doesn't come before the pin fall.



WWE SMACKDOWN VS. RAW 2009

The greased-up meatheads make their PS3 debut...

After a false start last year, the *WWE SmackDown vs. Raw* is finally making its way to PS3 in the guise of *WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2009*. Believe it or not, *SvR 2009* is actually the tenth title in the *SmackDown!* series – the first released on PSone in 2000. Right now, depending on who you believe, the series is actually the number one fighting game franchise in the world – which is either an admirable achievement or a bitterly depressing statistic. Either way, not bad for a sport that isn't, you know, actually real.

Moving on, we were lucky enough to get a glimpse of *SmackDown vs. Raw 2009* at THQ's Gamer's Day and fans are in for a treat. *SvR 2009* is really about two major things – both of which are probably enough to have WWE tragics phoning their mates in desperate search of a buddy who'll be willing to pop around and rub baby oil of their upper shoulders. Create-A-Finisher and a co-op story mode (complete with overhauled tag team

mechanics) appear for the very first time in the series.

The all-new Create-A-Finisher, something fans have been begging for, will allow players to do just that – create their own finishing move and put it on either Create-A-Superstars or the existing *WWE Superstars*. A simple creation interface will let users piece together over 500 animations to form the ultimate full-stop to your fights. It's still a work in progress, but at this point the creation interface looks like it'll be fairly easy to master. On the left of the screen a green avatar carries out the moves you're scrolling between on the right side of the screen. A set of numbers across the top of the screen let you know what stage of the process you're at, and a tracker keeps a bead on how much of the move memory you've used.

The co-op story mode is more of a storyline for the Road to WrestleMania mode, but it comes with a host of changes to the tag team formula. The

first big change is that both members will function under the same momentum meter now, and the second is the introduction of double team finishers. It'll freshen up the action a tad.

The first of the series of PS3, *SvR 2009* will likely have everything a wrestling fan needs for some oily action. The changes do seem to indicate that Yukes is trying to keep the experience fresh, which is admirable, given that it'd probably sell its waxed and sculpted manits off regardless. **— Luke Reilly**

BOTTOM LINE

Create-A-Finisher
Tag Team tweaks
Too much man arse

OPS is...
Hulking up

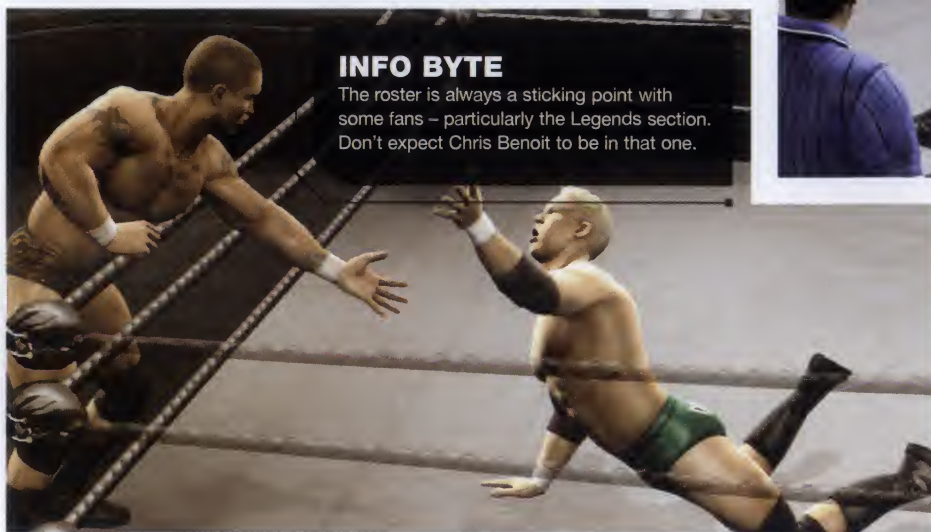


■ Kennedy's 'banana skin' prank backfired horribly...

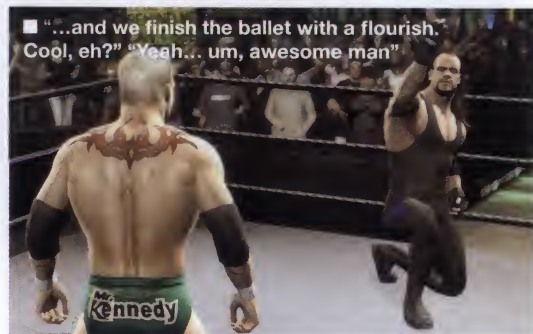


INFO BYTE

The roster is always a sticking point with some fans – particularly the Legends section. Don't expect Chris Benoit to be in that one.



■ "...and we finish the ballet with a flourish. Cool, eh?" "Yeah... um, awesome man"





Jumpi'rat: boing boing!

Surf_kid: I'm leading!!!

Bscout: 1, 2, 1, 2

Zebra: 3, 5, 8, 33

Zebra: 45, 2, 6, 18

Tieumax: 123 437 870

Taran_timo: Take 138: ACTION!

Agent007: that was the lat thing u did!

PamPam: What did I do?

AbFab: CUT!

AbFab: we have 2 do it again

CollapsXX: Ooooooops!!

Bboyzz: To the pool party?

SnowFlakes: Noooo!! Its all about Sn0w War!

BBking: Hey!!!

BBking: we r on the same side!!

Ziggy: Sorry!!!

Zpid: I need more balls

Dreama7: PEACE!!!

NoFear: Lets go and jump!

Pinguy: 2 high for me man!

EasyChilly: I'm getting hot in here!

Flygir101: Put your hand in da air!

THERE'S MORE LIFE AT

HABBO.com.au

hangout for teens

PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER
■ **PLAYERS:** 1-24
■ **RELEASE:** TBA
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** EA
■ **DEVELOPER:** DICE
■ **WEB:** www.badcompany.ea.com



■ **Name:** Geoff. **Likes:** going to the cinema and long walks in the park. **Dislikes:** girls who think they're 'all that' and double dippers



■ "Johnny, Johnny, hey Johnny – do you like my new moustache? Do ya?" "It's okay I guess"

BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY

We're at war. Didn't you get the memo?

Before you jump to conclusions *Battlefield: Bad Company* isn't a revenge story featuring a disgruntled employee with a sawn off shottie heading towards your last place of employment – y'know, the people that underpaid you, gave you a six second lunch break, and photoshopped your head onto Amy Winehouse's body for an inter-office memo. No, *Bad Company* is a singleplayer-focused shooter featuring

a dysfunctional squad that consists of: Sergeant Redford; the gruff no nonsense leader of the group, George Haggard; the hilarious all-nonsense pyromaniac of the group, Sweetwater; the bespectacled brains of the squad, and your character; Preston Marlowe the useless FNG (abbreviation hint: the last two letters stand for 'New Guy')

One of the coolest features of *Bad Company* is the fact that 90% of the

levels are destructible, including buildings, vehicles, vegetation (people, we're hoping) and more. They've kept it to 90% destructible for gameplay purposes, so rather than smooshing the environment to look like your local municipal tip, the frames of buildings and other objects will remain indestructible. Obviously this opens up some great new gameplay options, example: got an enemy sniper problem? Demolish the tall building he's camping in and rifle butt him in the face for being so impersonal. With opportunities like these being likely, you can understand why we're excited to score this one. **James Ellis**

BOTTOM LINE

OPS like destroy stuff
Finally, some plot
We need more than 90%

OPS is...
Breaking stuff



PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

■ **GENRE:** HORROR
■ **PLAYERS:** 1-TBC
■ **RELEASE:** LATE 08
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** EA
■ **DEVELOPER:** EA REDWOOD SHORES
■ **WEB:** www.ea.com/deadspace



■ This is where Rocky would train... if it was set in space... and Sly Stallone wasn't 70-years-old



DEAD SPACE

Confront the ultimate evil in the final frontier...

The horror/space genre is one welcomed with open arms here at OPS. Frankly, there just ain't enough of it. We love the slow building of terror in the vast quiet of uncharted regions, knowing death could be just around the corner. Woo hoo! It gives us the willies just thinking about it. Seriously, who doesn't love having the holy crap scared out of them? By year's end (fingers crossed) we should all find out how scary

space can be, and we're not talking about Michael Bay's *Armageddon* either!

Details are slowly starting to trickle down the pipeline for *Dead Space*, and we're grateful, as some of us have been tearing our hair out in anticipation. It's looking like a cross between *Event Horizon* and *Alien* as far as tone goes, and we like that.

A team is sent to investigate the status of the Ishimura – also known as

a planet cracker. These massive ships are used to mine dead planets for their natural resources, and in the process the Ishimura releases pure concentrated evil that begins to infect and take over the crew. Without this knowledge, the team arrives on the Ishimura and all hell breaks loose, literally. It's up to our main man, Isaac Clarke, to put all the pieces of the puzzle together and save the day.

Dead Space is really shaping up nicely. The lead character seems to have his own agenda, and is a jack-of-all-trades engineer instead of some hard bastard with a gun and surly attitude. Hopefully this should lead to some truly wonderful WTF moments and we can't wait! **Dave Kozicki**

BOTTOM LINE

Gravity defying FPS!
Scary scary stuff...
Not out 'til year's end

OPS is...
Shit-scared





PS3 PS2 PSP PREVIEW

- **GENRE:** RACING
- **PLAYERS:** 1-4 (2-16 ONLINE)
- **RELEASE:** NOW
- **DISTRIBUTOR:** RED ANT
- **DEVELOPER:** MILESTONE
- **WEB:** www.sbk07.com



SBK-08 SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

It's loud, it's proud, and it's only got two wheels

There's just something about most bike racing games that makes them just that little bit less popular than car racing games. Perhaps it's because, just as in the real world, they're much more intimidating than cars. Stuff up in a car and you crash. Stuff up on a bike and you're dead. More or less.

Whatever the reason, it's a damn shame, because bike racing games have an immediacy and a thrill factor missing from most car games – just like in real life.

The Superbike World Championship (SBK) was originally considered a step below the MotoGP Championship, but with recent rule changes eliminating some key differences between the two (primarily the decision to use four-stroke engines in MotoGP), the SBK has been inching ahead in popularity. It's long been a racing truism that 'what wins on Sunday sells on Monday' and in that department the superbikes have a huge advantage, being based on production bikes that punters can indeed buy on Monday.

All of which is a way of saying that SBK-08 has its work cut out for it. Fully licensed, with all riders, bikes and tracks, it's a highly accessible entry point for

those of us who are intrigued by bikes but found games like *Tourist Trophy* and the *MotoGP* series a little too technical.

It's pretty good. The overall sensation of speed is great and the five different levels of realism, combined with extensive bike tuning options, mean you can begin as a novice and hone your skills till you're matching settings, lap times and finishing positions with the pros.

One nice innovation is the in-game 'engineer', who acts as an in-game tutorial, giving suggestions on setup changes and as a result, teaching you how to get the best out of your bike.

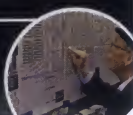
— Michael Butler

BOTTOM LINE

- ✓ Cool engineer gimmick
- ✓ Really, really fast
- ✓ Just an update?

OPS is...

Hedging its bets

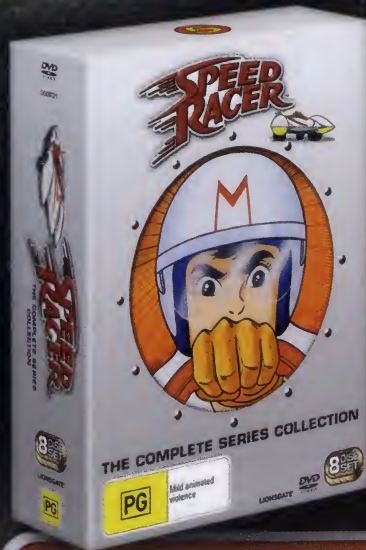


"HERE HE COMES,
HERE COMES SPEED RACER!"



SPEED RACER

GO... GO... GO!



RACE IN
FOR YOUR
COPY
ON DVD
APRIL 30

8-DISC SET WITH ALL 52 EPISODES
& JAM PACKED WITH EXTRAS!

"HE'S A DEMON ON WHEELS"

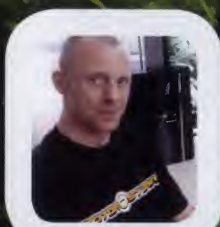
LIONSGATE

© 1966 Speed Racer Enterprises, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
SPEED RACER™ is a trademark of Speed Racer Enterprises, Inc. and is used under license.
© 2008 Layout and Design Lions Gate Entertainment. All Rights Reserved.



Riders on The Storm

MotorStorm 2 producer Paul Hollywood drops into *OPS* Towers to talk dirty



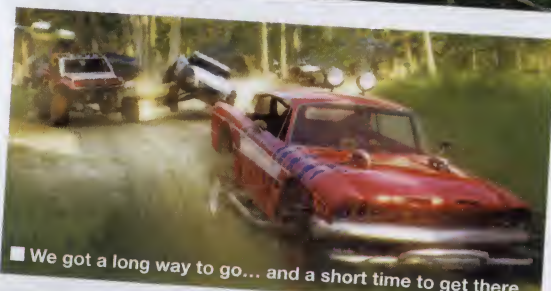
OPS: We can see immediately what's changed; you've ditched the desert for a deserted island. What sort of avenues does that open up?

PH: Lots, lots. In relation to *MotorStorm 1*, and *MotorStorm 1*'s environment, that was a very consistent environment. It was Monument Valley; it was desert – red rock. We had mud in there, as well as some destructible objects. It was a good platform to start building up our technology again. Now that we have all that technology built and running it allows us to be a bit more elaborate with where we're going to set the game. So that was the first thing we wanted to do, pick a really cool location and put the same, cool gaming experience – what we call the *MotorStorm* DNA – in a different

location. What we've done is created this fictitious island, but we've based it on Hawaii. We've taken all the best bits of Hawaii and sort of mashed them together. So, on the island we've got vegetation, we've got water, we've got lava, we've got tracks on ridges, going around corners – so there's a lot more of a variety of racing environments and, from that, gameplay additions to the racing series.

OPS: Hawaii boasts 11 of the 13 climate zones in the world – we imagine the tracks are wildly varied.

PH: I was lucky enough to go on the reference trip, which was a fantastic experience, and while I was there I was just thinking, "All we have to do is replicate this and it's a winner straight away." The one thing for me about the environment was the tension between different areas, different environment types. You walk around the corner and you've gone from bush, jungle, rainforest to death, barren – nothing, like



■ We got a long way to go... and a short time to get there

■ Shiny next gen mud: it never gets old





a lava field. That sort of tension between those areas and that sort of variety, when you put them into the tracks, gives you a really good racing experience. We've got 16 tracks in the game now, which is twice as many as we had in the first game. We've got them spread out, using all those elemental features.

OPS: We found the original *MotorStorm* reminded us of *SSX* – it wasn't the amount of tracks, it was the quality of the tracks. Each track was finely crafted and a star in its own right. Is it difficult is it to build tracks with character and balance so many multiple routes?

PH: Yes, it's very difficult. Basically, what we have in *MotorStorm* is seven different classes of vehicles. You have the bike, the ATV, the

rear-wheel-drive buggy, the rally car, the racing truck, the mud pluggie and the big rig. So, what we wanted to do, depending on which vehicles you chose, is make sure that experience gives you sort of the same lap time as you go around the track. So, in essence,

the monster trucks, which add to the whole sweeping vehicle experience. So we have even more of a challenge now with the tracks to balance a vehicle that can basically drive over everything and take through water a lot easier. So the process of designing the tracks

end of the year. Between now and then we're going to go through that process of refinement – we didn't quite have that luxury on the first game because we were doing a launch title for the PlayStation 3. We created the game, and with all the best intentions to produce

the best game that we could, but I'm looking forward so much more to this game because we now have that period where we can really, really refine it and make sure the tracks are absolutely perfect.

Of course we've doubled our number

of tracks, so we've got a little bit more work to do. There's a lot more in the game, therefore there's a lot more to tune up.

Another thing I'd like to say, another big thing for me about the game – again,

“We’ve got 16 tracks in the game now, which is twice as many as we had in the first game...”

the tracks were seven tracks in one. We had to balance the routes, and we used destructible objects and mud to keep the vehicles within comparative lap times. Now we've introduced an eighth vehicle class, so now we've got

is very tough – we build it, we play it and we tweak it, and that goes on for months and months. Where we're at right now is we've got all the components together, all the technologies are now defined and we're due to go out towards the

■ Who's going to win? The guy with the beard obviously. Beards make you go faster...



■ Despite racing at ludicrously high speeds, Grandad still found time to wag a finger at those pesky young'uns



■ “Why won't my boat start?” said the blind, confused Captain...



going back to *MotorStorm 1*, we did as much as we could in the time we had to get the game out – the main omission, and the first thing we planned for *MotorStorm 2*, was split-screen racing. We've now got four-player split-screen racing. We knew it'd be really good fun, and the whole community was saying, "We want it" – and they're absolutely right, we're playing it in the studio now and it's fantastic. My ambition is to have something that will be, for this generation of consoles, the ultimate multi-racing game – the whole split-screen, social experience. We've also got 16-players online and new game modes.

OPS: What do you feel your competition within this space is?

PH: I believe that when we created *MotorStorm 1* we brought

something new to the racing genre, something fresh. The thing we tried to do, and our mantra, is that every moment make sure the player is firstly entertained, then they're challenged and that's what I believe gives that special edge to the game – there's always action going on, there's always something fun, laughter, rivalry, so we built upon that for *MotorStorm 2*. We're not aiming to beat anybody else; we're creating our own path. There are quite a few games that are trying to follow us; but all we want to do is create something that is a racing game, and we have come from a heritage of serious racing games with the *WRC* series, but it's only got one foot in that sort of reality, the other foot is in pure entertainment, pure laugh-out-loud gear. We try not to concern ourselves too much with the competition; we have our own extremely high expectations.


We spend a lot of time, late at night, working hard, pushing ourselves as far as we can.

OPS: After the success of *MotorStorm*, would you say there's a new eagerness? You did five iterations of *WRC*, and while *Rally Evolved* was rad is there a new buzz at Evolution now you've started something fresh and huge?

PH: I'm really pleased you like *Rally Evolved*, that was the one I was around for. The reaction to working on five *WRC* games, and having that license restraint – you can't smash the vehicle up in the way, you can't do that, you can't drive there, creatively it was incredibly frustrating for us – the reaction to that was *MotorStorm*. We've got the massive power of this console to do everything we wanted to do in a computer game and we had the opportunity to do a launch title, so we knew

it'd have a lot of exposure straight away. It was like every Christmas and birthday coming at once, and we grabbed it by the horns and just went for it. I was very proud when we finished the game, and we got the game out in the box and had people playing it. Since then, the success, we're the global number one bestselling PlayStation 3 game at this stage – that's something you wish for but you don't expect. Our benchmark now is to beat ourselves, and better, not only the commercial success but also the critical success, and get that following behind us and keep going from strength to strength.

OPS: With the popularity of user-created content of the rise and the potential for hilarious captured moments from *MotorStorm*, not unlike *SKATE*, very high, is this something you've considered?

PH: Yeah, we've considered it... 



WTF!

If you've seen the latest *MotorStorm 2* trailer (and if you haven't – get downloading) you'll have notice some subtle changes. Most noticeable is the destructable foliage, and the none to subtle boobage given to the females... not that we're complaining!!

■ "Shine yer shoes guvnor?"
(Obscure caption guide: this guy's English)

SOUL

The *Soulcalibur* series has long lived under *Tekken*. It's shared similar, if not greater, critical as Namco's seminal brawler. We're not here to – we don't think it'll happen and we dare say this is about. *SC/IV* isn't about delivering a it's about delivering the sequel that the deserve. That, we can report, Project Soul



FOOD

the shadow of its more successful stablemate, praise – but never moved the same numbers suggest *SC/IV* will be the game to change that Namco doesn't either. But that's not what knockout blow to its sans-swords brother; incredibly dedicated fans of *Soulcalibur* appears to be taking very seriously.





■ Beard. He wins. No, stop talking, that's that



■ Is anybody else having Jurassic Park flashbacks?

It's raining in Tokyo, and the trapezium-shaped Namco Bandai building may just be the oddest thing we've seen so far during our flying visit to the land of the rising sun. It most certainly won't be by the time we leave (that's a three-way tie between the cappuccino-in-a-can, a bald businessman trying to sneak into the ladies toilets at GASPANIC, and the build-your-own-octopus-bondage-action-figure from a gumball machine), but after a few local ales and some authentic Japanese spaghetti bolognese the place looks decidedly kooky. As the cabal of journalists from all corners of Europe, and in our case, Sydney, dutifully file into the foyer we're greeted with a smiling Pac-Man. We're hoping for one, although he resides off the main path behind a sign we can't read, but probably says 'Don't Touch'. We resist the urge to sneak over and stick our heads in his mouth for a photo, mostly just because there's a pleasant looking security guard standing nearby who, if the rest of Japan is anything to go by, is probably the most polite man on Earth. We didn't want to have to make him tell us to

stop – he'd probably feel terrible.

Besides, we were here to play *Soulcalibur IV*.

THE SOUL STILL BURNS

It's a familiar beast, *Soulcalibur IV*. Fans will probably be relieved to know Namco hasn't drastically changed the series in any harmful ways. An array of tweaks will help ease newcomers into its considerable depth, but we think *Soulcalibur* pundits of old will remain pleased. The game itself has been totally rebuilt, cashing in on the strengths of the new generation of ridiculously powerful hardware – but this isn't revolution, it's evolution.

We were able to get our hands on a few returning favourites (as well as new characters like Hilde and guest star Darth Vader) and were, more or less, instantly at home behind the controls. That, however, is not to say there isn't anything new in *SCIV*. Quite the opposite, in fact.

HEART AND SOUL

The first new element of *SCIV* we were introduced to was a new gauge, the Soul Gauge. Brought in to deter





■ Collar. Hot



SO IS IT ONE WORD OR TWO?

Confusion still reigns as to whether it's *Soulcalibur* or *Soul Calibur*. Officially, it's the former. According to the handy style guide Namco saw fit to provide us with on our recent sojourn to Japan, and (most) *SCIV* press releases it's *Soulcalibur*. Back when EA distributed *SCII*, however, it was marketed locally as two words – and the original *Soul Blade* was two words as well. People seem to be slowly coming around to the whole one-word thing, even though it doesn't actually make sense. So, *Soulcalibur* the game is one word, but the sword itself, the Soul Calibur, is two words? Man, we need to sit down for a second or two.

endless blocking, the Soul Gauge is an important new feature. When neither player has the upper hand the gauge remains a neutral green, but as one player lands strikes things begin to change. The Soul Gauge of the player with the advantage begins to turn blue, and the Soul Gauge of the player getting wailed on – albeit blocking – begins to turn red. When they begin to flash things become slightly more interesting. The Soul Gauge is linked to another new gauge – one linked to the armour on the characters. At moments of extreme disadvantage (when your Soul Gauge is flashing red) it's possible for your attacker to land a massive blow that'll destroy part of your armour – lower, middle or upper (depending on the hit you take). If they're successful, a segment of this second gauge will disappear – along with any armour you're wearing in that particular area. You'll see it shatter, and your character will take on a distinctly different appearance. This isn't, however, solely a visual thing – destruction of a part of your opponent's armour opens them up to what Namco is calling the Critical Finish. The Critical Finish is a

difficult one-hit-kill move that can only be performed after you've destroyed a chunk of your foe's armour. It's persistent across the match, so you can successfully demolish somebody's armour in one round and nail a Critical Finish on them in the next. We were only privy to a few on these finishers – Siegfried's involved an explosion of giant shards of ice from below the ground and Taki's one seemed to involve a bunch of several teleporting doppelgangers getting stabby. Nifty.

They remind us somewhat of *Mortal Kombat*'s Fatalities, although *SCIV*'s finishers are bloodless and aren't a footnote to a winning bout – they're a decisive way to end one.

The reasoning behind a lot of these changes is simple – when an opponent is guarding it's often incredibly tough to find an opening. The Soul Gauge and Critical Finish moves make remaining entirely on the defensive untenable – you have to fight, or else you'll be thoroughly softened up and promptly executed. It adds a new strategic layer to what's already far more than a simple button-basher and encourages players to go on the offensive.



■ "Can't you feel the sparks between us?"



■ Siegfried's Critical Finish. That's cold...



NEW BLOOD

Then, of course, there are the new characters. One of them in particular, was a rather striking departure for the series. New lass Hildegard von Krone, or Hilde for short, is remarkably different to the usual *Soulcalibur* female sword-swingers. With the exception of her face there's nary a sliver of flesh to be seen, and her armour-clad frame is a real change for the normally quite scantily clad female contingent of the SC series. Her breasts are safely tucked away underneath armour-plating – not flapping around in the breeze like two bags of oranges. However, it's not just Hilde's design and outfit that set her apart, though, it's also her gear. Hilde wields both a short sword and

a spear, which means she's relatively adept at both short- and long-range attacks. Hilde dual wields these bad boys, constantly balancing her attacks between distance strikes and close-quarters combat.

Each of Hilde's weapons is assigned to different buttons on the controller, and can be combined for different vertical and horizontal strikes. Players ought to have a good deal of flexibility with Hilde, and although not all her moveset was in place we found she was able to more than measure up to some series stalwarts. Poke, slash, poke, slash. She's good.

SITH HAPPENS

Of course, it'd be remiss of us not to report upon our time with *SCIV*'s bonus bad-arse, Darth "Who's Your Daddy?" Vader. Darth Vader will ship as an unlockable contender in the PS3 version of *SCIV* – Xbox 360 owners will need to make do with Yoda. There's a better than average chance we'll see Yoda as a downloadable extra on the PS Network, but for now we're more than content with Vader. Yoda is a bit of a bitch, we found. We had about half-a-dozen stoushes with Vader, who has a ton of powerful moves at his disposal. An additional gauge, unique to the *Star Wars* characters, is the Force Gauge. The Force Gauge indicates when you're able to unleash a Force Move. In Vader's case they vary between a telekinetic choke-slam, a Force toss (handy for ring-outs) and a couple of others equally cool Force abilities. His moves are highly effective, but also great to watch. It helps that the Vader model is incredibly detailed, down to his long, flowing cloak that drags on the ground. He even comes with his own stage, set inside the hangar of the Death Star – complete with X-Wings dogfighting with Tie Fighters in the background, forcefields that damage opponents knocked

SILVER SCREEN SOUL

Way back in Spring, 2001, everybody's favourite fat and jolly martial arts star Sammo Hung began plans for a movie adaptation of *Soulcalibur*, with Jackie Chan set to star. Then nothing happened. Any trace of the movie disappeared from Sammo's official website and it was assumed the film was cancelled. Warren Zide's Anthem Pictures since acquired the rights to adapt the game to film, and unveiled a teaser website. Unfortunately, the only update to said website in two years was the changing of the intended release year to 2007. All but the very slowest of you are probably aware it's currently 2008. We think this is deader than disco.



“PS” and “PLAYSTATION” are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. “PS” is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. All rights reserved. The NBA and individual NBA member team identifications reproduced on this product are trademarks and copyrighted designs and/or other forms of intellectual property that are the exclusive property of NBA Properties, Inc. and the respective NBA member teams and may not be used, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of NBA Properties, Inc. © 2007 NBA Properties, Inc. © 2007 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Licensed for sale to Sony Computer Entertainment Europe in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Oceania. KSPS1983/OPSIM

NOTHING GETS YOU CLOSER - NBA '08

From the dimples on the ball to the sweat on their skin, NBA '08 is the most realistic basketball game ever. With 1080p HIGH DEFINITION graphics and full NBA licensing you can play with the team of your dreams. All you need after that is perfect tactics and supreme skill to make it to the top of the league and into NBA history.



Also available on PlayStation 2. Exclusive to PlayStation
playstation.com.au



This is living.

PLAYSTATION 3



■ Not the most appropriate swordfighting garb. Hot though...

into them and John Williams' haunting Imperial March – Darth Vader's theme – playing in the background. It's no surprise, really, but we dare say Darth will be the default choice for many PS3 owners.

Why Darth Vader? It's quite an anecdote, really. The story goes that the team were digging for potential cameo characters for *SCIV*, and the lightsabre-wielding Jedi Knights were put forward as a lighthearted suggestion – no one really believing such an coup could be arranged. However, what seemed impossible turned out to be quite the opposite – the potentially sticky licensing maze was navigated and, lo-and-behold, the scourge of the galaxy is facing off against armour-plated Samurai and ample-chested assassins.

GET ACTIVE

Also new is *SCIV*'s Active

Matching Battle system, or AMB for fans of geeky acronyms. AMB struck us, at least, as a kind of team-based tag match where team of opponents battled each other (or just one opponent) for ultimate supremacy. The bouts, as far as we could tell, were replaced with life points. Extinguish all your opponents' orbs' and you win. Competitive online makes its debut too, although details are scant. The Create-a-Player mode returns, no doubt buoyed by next gen muscle (especially after the slightly disappointing customisation of *SCIII*).

HARD YAKKA

If you're wondering just how much work goes into a fighting game like *Soulcalibur IV*, you're not the first. How tough can it be, really? Build a few characters, get them to swipe at each other – job done? Naturally, no. In fact it takes months and

months of work for the crew at Project Soul to introduce just one new character. They need to be built, sure, but more importantly they need to be balanced – and that's what every fighting game strives for, and what Project Soul strives for.

In this day and age, Namco will be able to update *SCIV* over the magic of the PS network should any unforeseen exploits make it through the rigorous testing procedures it has in place – but that doesn't make getting it right the first time any less important.

Soulcalibur IV, for many at Namco, is the culmination of many, many years of work on the franchise. It was abundantly clear to us from our time with the team that they're extremely dedicated to crafting the ultimate brawler. For fans, it'll be the series' first dabble in the next gen pool, and we don't think they'll be disappointed. **B**

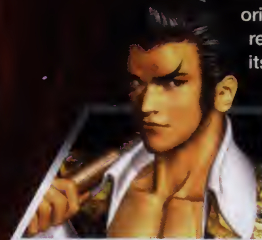
COLLECTIVE SOUL

For those who came in late, the *Soul* series revolves around a sword that, after years of intense bloodshed, gained a soul of its own (the Soul Edge), and the sword forged to counter it, (the Soul Calibur). It's not Shakespeare but the popular series has been a consistent critical success.



Soul Edge/Soul Blade (1996/1997)

Dubbed *Soul Edge* in Japan and *Soul Blade* elsewhere, the game follows nine warriors in a quest to obtain the legendary sword, the Soul Edge. After first appearing in arcades it was ported to the original PlayStation console and received widespread praise for its innovation.



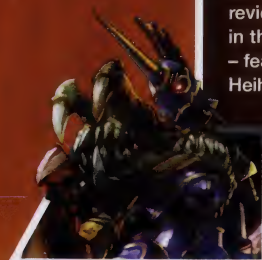
Soulcalibur (1998/1999)

The second game in the *Soul* series, ported from arcades to the Sega Dreamcast. It went on to become one of the best-selling Dreamcast titles ever and is often cited as the greatest fighting game of all time. It is ranked as the fourth-best game of all-time by review aggregator site Game Rankings.



Soulcalibur II (2002/2003)

Soulcalibur II was released in arcades three years after the previous outing, and subsequently ported to all three consoles last generation. The game reaped near-perfect reviews. It was the first game in the series to feature cameos – featured on PS2's roster is Heihachi Mishima from *Tekken*.



Soulcalibur III (2005)

Breaking with tradition, *SCIII* was released only for PS2 in 2005, before an arcade edition was seen. It featured 42 selectable characters and interactive stages. *SCIII* is generally regarded as the weakest, despite its character creation system and 'Chronicles of the Sword' story mode.



■ Pillowfights with Kilik. They're over fast



PlayStation®2



Ratchet and Clank™, Size Matters™, ©2007 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Developed by High Impact Games. Ratchet and Clank™ is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. KSES1982/0594

playstation.com.au

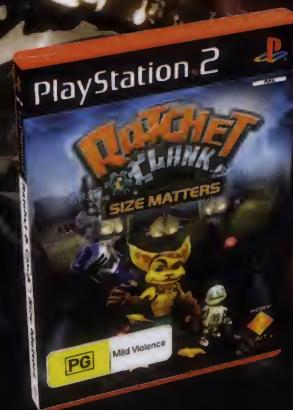
PG

Mild
violence



Shrunk down to microscopic size and tooled up with a devastating array of weaponry, Ratchet and Clank bring their biggest, smallest adventure yet to PlayStation®2.

THERE IS NOTHING SMALL ABOUT THIS GAME



OPS: We've been haunted by that tantalizing (German speaking) trailer since the convention at Leipzig. Whatever was going on in that restaurant scene, it looked like pretty serious business. Can you give us a better insight into the main characters and the plot of *Mafia II*?

Daniel Vavra: *Mafia II* is about Vito Scaletta, young native-born Sicilian wannabe and his buddy Joe Barbaro, who grew up in poor neighborhood with gangsters as their only role models. Vito wants a better life than his father had and because he has no

fat party animal" Hawaiian shirt). Is dark comedic relief a major feature in this sequel – and are you using any noteworthy voice actors in the game?

DV: Yeah, there is lot of dark humor. The story itself is not very optimistic, but I think that what makes a good gangster flick is the right mix of drama and dark humor. A dark or a funny character? It is our goal that *Mafia II* will have the right mixture of both drama and humour.

The English voiceovers you heard are still not final and not all of the actors have been selected.

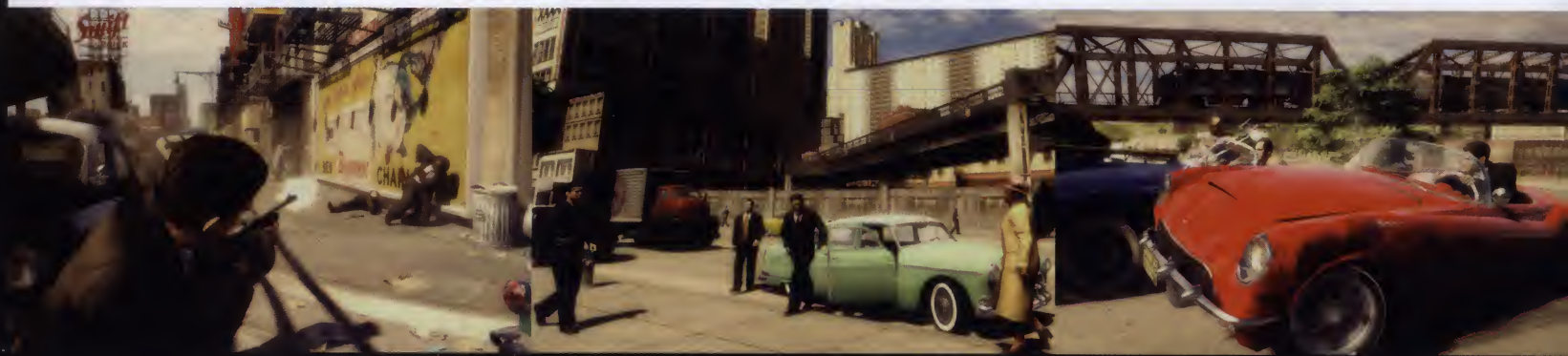
OPS: Looking back, were there any key elements of the cult-classic original that you've purposefully decided to retain and evolve for this sequel?

DV: We wanted to stick with all the elements that made the first game such a memorable experience. Those being, a movie-like, story-based experience instead of a "you can do everything" sandbox game. Of course you can still do almost anything, but our main goal from the onset of this project was to craft a truly engaging story, intense action-oriented gameplay, characters the gamers can really bond to,

be featured in *Mafia II*. Regarding multiplayer, we are very much focused on creating an incredible single player experience and don't want to divert any effort away from this one singular goal.

OPS: Do you plan to take advantage of the PlayStation Network by offering downloadable content/user created content for *Mafia II* in the future?

DV: Playstation Network offers some great opportunities and we already have some very cool ideas for downloadable content, but nothing has been finalised.



DAMN IT FEELS GOOD TO BE A GANGSTER

OPS grills **Daniel Vavra**, Lead Designer and Story Writer for *Mafia II* at 2K Czech

WORDS BY ADAM MATHEW

education, he decides to become a "made man". Joe on the other hand just enjoys being a respected bad guy. We tell the story about how they try to become real mobsters. Gamers will experience Vito's rise through to ranks as he tries to become a respected member of the Organized Crime community.

OPS: Also, we were struck like a Sicilian backslap by the impressive detail on some of the character models portrayed in the trailer – are we talking game engine there, or pre-rendered cutscenes?

DV: The trailer is a pre-rendered video using game models. I guess you already saw a bunch of new screenshots from the game, so you can see for yourself how close to the trailer they actually are.

OPS: When we finally saw the English trailer we heard a great deal of witty dialogue coming from the characters (in particular the chubby gangster in the "big

OPS: Whether it's *The Sopranos*, *Carlito's Way*, *Scarface*, *The Godfather*, *Donnie Brasco* or *Goodfellas* – OPS very much digs the old school gangland pop culture. Has *Mafia II* been influenced by particular mobster books/films/TV shows?

DV: *Mafia I* was inspired by movies. It was a tribute to all those good gangster flicks, but with *Mafia II* I

and believable mafia styled missions that blend seamlessly with the story we are telling.

There are enough great sandbox style games out there that deliver similar gaming experiences. From a creative standpoint, we purposely chose to shy away from that design philosophy to create a more unique, gangster, story-driven experience.

"EVEN IF WE WANTED TO BE MORE ACCURATE THAN WE ARE NOW, I DOUBT IT'S POSSIBLE..."

wanted to stand on my own feet, so the story is more inspired by real events and real gangsters. I read a lot of non-fiction this time around.

But if I was forced to choose one movie that had an influence on *Mafia II*, it has to be *Goodfellas*. It's one of the best gangster movies of all time and that too is based on true events.

OPS: Will *Mafia II* make use of the SIXAXIS in some way (like "pouring someone concrete shoes" in a minigame)? And/or will you be including any co-op or adversarial multiplayer modes this time?

DV: We are still experimenting with ideas for the SIXAXIS controller, so it's too early to tell if and how it will

OPS: We noticed that the trailer had some very authentic 1950s music ('Oh Marie' by Louis Prima). Can you tell us about the degree of detail you guys went to when creating the look and feel of the era?

DV: Capturing the look and feel of the era is incredibly important to us. We went to New York and took thousands of pictures. Lots of research went into the design of every single mission. Everything in the game has its real contemporary counterpart. We have a library of thousands of pictures of buildings, cars, machines, people, cities. Even if we wanted to be more accurate than we are now, I doubt it's possible.

OPS: How big is the environment of Empire city? How many types of cars are there for an enterprising pizano to get across town in? Are there other vehicles?

DV: Empire City is much bigger than Lost Heaven (the city featured in *Mafia I*) and this time there is bigger variety

and a lot more to do. Just like in the original *Mafia*, there is a wide range of cars, but as time has moved on they are much, much faster, than the cars in *Mafia I*, especially the sports cars.

OPS: Will cultish fans be witness to sly references from the original game – perhaps some Salieri connections, or some “visit Lost Heaven” tourism posters, or even a cameo by the not-yet-whacked protagonist of the first game?

DV: No comment. But keep your eyes open.



OPS: Free-roaming sandbox games have become quite popular since the original helped to blaze the trail. What extra “bada-bing” does *Mafia II* pack that’ll outdo its upstart rivals?

DV: In short, *Mafia II* has got the “bada-boom” to its rivals “bada-bing” J What I mean by that is *Mafia II* marches to its own beat. *Mafia II* will have a story that really matters, something that is a bit of a lost art in a lot of the games we play these days. It has one of the best physics models that equate to great car handling, spot on controls, and most importantly... everything in the game comes together to create a deep, mature, cinematic experience. 🐕



■ Dogs: they're for tough guys. Tough guys with beards like this dude. Also note the cane: canes are for pimps – pimps with cool beards. Most impressive. Daniel Vavra. Kinda scary

HIGHWAY TO THE DANGER



WORDS: ADAM MATHEW

Looking back, the movie *Top Gun* was an intensely educational experience. Firstly it taught us that if you're in the Bowlo on a Saturday night and a mate attempts a strafing run on a hen's party – you never, ever leave your wingman. Secondly, if you're ever faced with a 'multiple bogey situation', you should systematically isolate each one and give them the flick – an important rule that is perfectly interchangeable between targeting aircraft and effective nasal hygiene...

Seriously though, who among us can honestly say they haven't watched *Top Gun* an insane

amount of times and have become completely taken in by the cavalier, high flying, cheeseball American antics of Tom Cruise's character Lieutenant Pete Mitchell a.k.a 'Maverick'. Questionable acting aside, pretty every single man-child of the eighties was wowed stupid by the crazy dogfighting scenes depicted in the movie; including it seems, the big wigs in Ubisoft, because they've put their immensely talented Romanian studio behind the control stick of a brand new flight sim IP – *Tom Clancy's HAWX*. Now, before anybody can get overly excited or confused here, this game has bugger all to do with the aforementioned eighties movie, and although the phrase 'hawx' may sound similar to the guttural noise you make in the back of your throat before you get your spit on – it's so much more than that. Speaking plainly, it is the most

impressive and innovative flight based videogames we've seen in years, *Ace Combat* series included.

I FEEL THE NEED – THE NEED... FOR SPEED...

Unlike the Hollywood wankery depicted in *Top Gun*, *HAWX* will lean much closer to the realism depicted in the other Tom Clancy franchises. This means that there's none of that 'defend the fictitious country of Fakemeria, from the dastardly, invading Imaginarian Air Force'

crap to be found.

Instead, the plot kicks off in 2012 where you're an enlisted pilot on your very last mission for the US military – which, coincidentally happens to be a bombing run in New Mexico to provide air support for Scott Mitchell from *GRAV 2*. Once this introductory mission wraps itself up your character decides to try his luck working for a PMC (private military company), a move that will offer him greater pay, access to a multitude of aircraft, and being a mercenary he's no



The main image is a dramatic aerial scene featuring a large, dark, multi-engine aircraft in the upper center, possibly a bomber or transport plane, flying through a cloudy sky. Below it, a smaller, sleeker fighter jet is seen from a side profile, moving towards the right. A bright, fiery explosion or missile trail cuts across the middle of the frame. In the lower left, the wing and tail of another aircraft are visible. The bottom of the cover is divided into three smaller inset images: the left one shows a dogfight between several fighter jets over a city; the middle one shows a fighter jet banking sharply with its afterburners glowing; the right one shows a close-up of a fighter jet's nose and cockpit.

TOM CLANCY'S HAWK // FEATURE

ZONE



FEATURE // TOM CLANY'S HAWX

longer bound by the usual constraints of the US military (that is, saying oorah way too much and the fragile concept of morality).

HAWX promises to feature 50 real world aircraft, which will be used to fly a variety of mission types whether it's air superiority, close air support for infantry units, escorts, bombing runs, or infiltration beneath enemy radar. From what we could identify the game showed footage of an A-10, a Rafale, a FA/18 Hornet, F-14 Tomcats, Joint Strike Fighters, F-22s, F16s, and an Su-27 among others. Trust us, we pleaded with our Ubisoft minders to give us a fuller list but they told us that the information was classified – and they could tell us, but then they'd have to kill us. Interestingly enough, one of the Belgian journalists boldly took them up on this offer, had the plane list whispered into his ear, and was escorted from the room by beefy security personnel – we don't

know what they told him, but he had a massive grin on his face before he died.

THERE WERE BOGEYS LIKE FIREFLIES ALL OVER THE SKY...

Being set in the future, all the aircraft in *HAWX* have been retroactively fitted with an Enhanced Reality System (ERS) which is a computer aid that offers the pilot an unprecedented degree of control over his plane. With ERS in 'Tactical On' mode your plane is basically in a 'safe mode' (well, 'safe-ish' mode); with a press of a button you can request a calculated firing solution on an enemy, or an escape vector from an incoming heatseeker missile. These solutions appear as large gate-like images on your HUD which must be flown through in sequence to either get behind your intended victim or escape certain missile death. Tactical On has some drawbacks however, the computer calculations require large amounts of computing power which is

allotted by a slowly replenishing energy meter that renders the system unusable if it's empty. When this happens, you'll either have to wait for it to come online again or 'do some of that piloting shit'.

Switching into 'Tactical Off' mode is a surprisingly entertaining experience; your view switches to a dogfighting external camera that contextually locks onto any nearby threat and your jet is no longer constrained by the usual safety systems that limit the engine's maximum speed and thus it's maneuverability. Basically Tactical Off means that you can fly by instinct rather than technology by turning and burning to get out of tricky situations and out-fly your enemies. However, there is a downside to all this acrobatical lunacy; because while you now have access to drift-like maneuvers, which can have the same strategic effect as the 'we'll hit the brakes and he'll fly right by' scene in *Top Gun* – if you push the envelope too much you'll be in mortal danger of stalling your ride like an L plater.

Needless to say, this is the quickest way to end up a cooked Goose.

The concept of the ERS system is a welcome and surprising twist on the usual flight game design where you hardly ever see your plane in an external view, and you mindlessly line up your very distant enemies in a targeting box and fire-and-forget. There seems to be a very sensible balance here too with both the Tactical On/Off modes having inherent vulnerabilities that force you to adapt and strategise as the battle gains intensity.

GOODNESS GRACIOUS, GREAT BALLS OF FIRE!

Looking across at the screens, you probably don't need us to tell you that the game is enough to make anybody's eyeballs water with primal lust. Imagine if you will, these visuals blistering along at 60fps with exaggerated afterburner flames, spider webs of missile smoke criss-crossing the stratosphere, above



■ Clouds – we're pretty sure you can't sit on them



■ "Hey Johnson – is that your wife? And is she making out with Guy? Whoa, she really is a firecracker!"

■ "Hey! Get off my back! I'm flyin' heeeeeeere!!!!!"



"ROGER THAT BIG BIRD, I'M GOING IN..."

Borrowing a feature from their upcoming strategy game *EndWar*, if you plug in a microphone will support the use of voice commands. Details are still a little sketchy but from what we could gather Ubisoft Romania has plans to allow weapon selection, ERS mode switching, and the issuing of support unit orders by just speaking them aloud. This fancy new system compliments the existing function of a microphone and headset on PS3: harassing your unworthy competition in multiplayer by questioning their odour and such.



playstation.com.au

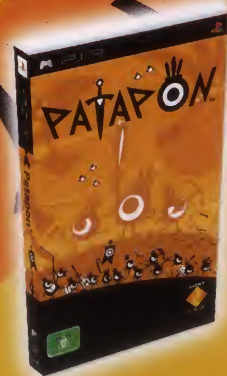
SLIM & LITE

PlayStation®Portable

Patapon™ ©2008 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. (C)2008 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.
Patapon™ and "PATA" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "PATA" is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.



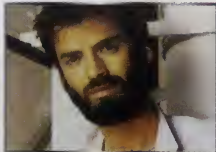
Give in to the beat
As if you have a choice. Using nothing but your rhythm to control an army of Patapons, a life of Patapon induced chanting and foot tapping is just around the corner.



WHAT WE WANT:

KENNY LOGGINS:

'Highway to the Dangerzone'. It'd be criminal not to include this song, or at least the option to custom soundtrack it into the proceedings.



SINGSTAR MINIGAME:

Get unlockables if you can bust out 'You've Lost that Loving Feeling' in a local bar and score some carnal knowledge on the premises.



COMMUNICATING:

During multiplayer we want to bust out a four G inverted dive with a MiG 28 and give somebody the bird. Now that we think of it; there should be polaroids too.



SCREWING UP:

Rather than using a game over screen, make us pay for our mistakes by making us fly a mission as a cargo plane full of rubber dogshit out of Hong Kong.



BUZZING THE TOWER:

After a successful mission we need to celebrate by flying really fast past the air control tower and spilling people's hot beverages.



FIREFOX:

We want to fly an experimental Russian super fighter that has bad arse reverse firing missiles and has to be controlled by thinking in Russian. Da baby!



■ May we be amongst the first to say... wowzers



■ Pilots: everyone wanted to be one when they grew up



■ Except most people are too blind or stupid to actually do it



metropolitan cities with insane amounts of ground detail. We can also tell you that *HAWX* features some of the meatiest explosions that, like the clouds you fly through, have a super-realistic density to them. In terms of photorealism for the ground, Ubisoft Romania approached an external company Geo Eye for satellite images, the end result of which is near military grade imagery that is four times the resolution you'll see on Google Earth. Not content with this, the graphics artists have also gone through and 3D modeled every major building represented in each environment – which, in dense urban locales like Rio di Janeiro, look simply phenomenal. As yet there's no word to whether the Geo Eye satellite imagery has inadvertently captured some Brazilian hotties sunbaking. Fingers are very much crossed on that one.

Getting past the scenery, *HAWX* also features flashy HUD elements that do a sublime job of making you believe that you are strapped into a high tech bird of war. You're given access to the staple Tom Clancy CrossCom system which is a handy picture-in-picture way of providing you with video imagery of your commanders.

Not only can the CrossCom system keep you up to date with mission objectives, it is also a valuable tool for directing friendly forces during the conflict, whether it's ground based infantry, tanks, AWACS, jamming, or even eye-in-the-sky satellites and other fandangle orbital technology.

YOU CAN BE MY WINGMAN ANYTIME – BULLSHIT, YOU CAN BE MINE...

Plans are very much in place to make *HAWX* a multiplayer experience that

will pack more crazy dogfighting antics than disgraced gridiron player Michael Vick's backyard. For the first time ever in the air combat genre, you'll be able to play the entire solo campaign with four players via a 'jump-in' cooperative mode that comes equipped with complementary weapons and extra challenges. You heard right; you, Goose, Iceman and Slider can all fly the same sortie and work together to achieve multiple objectives – or if you're like us, you'll spend fifteen minutes trying to cut each other off and induce lethal flat spins.

In the adversarial mode, you can challenge up to 15 friends in intense dog-fighting sessions and finally settle who the best of the best is. In a system similar to *Rainbow Six Vegas 2*, winning a match will reward you with experience points to improve your skills and money to unlock more weapons. Thankfully

these rewards are completely interchangeable between both single and multi play.

All in all we left the beautiful Romanian capital of Bucharest with sky high hopes for *Tom Clancy's HAWX*. Even those among you who only have a passing interest in fighter jets and aviation should definitely take some time away from your usual staple diet of platformers, racers, and first person shooters to become utterly gobsmacked by the visuals and the sheer speed of this game.

Only time will tell how the bold invention of the EPS will be taken by the purists, and whether or not Ubisoft Romania will be able to maintain a fine balance between simulation and arcade thrills. In the meantime, we'll continue to track this baby on our OPS radar screen and we recommend that you all keep an eye on the sky... ☄

FACE YOUR FRIENDS ON THE FAIRWAY!



"PS" and "PLAYSTATION" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "PS" is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. All rights reserved. ©2007 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by Clap Hanz Ltd. Everybody's Golf is a trademark or registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe.



Easy to play but tough to master, Everybody's Golf on the PS3 is a fun, interactive game that everybody can enjoy, whether it's instant four player mode or using the incredible online tournament where you compete against up to 50 other players!

The choice is yours, but with the PS3 bringing you an Incredible HD experience, you won't be disappointed.

So, are you the best in your house or the best on the planet?

playstation.com.au



This is living

PLAYSTATION 3

WORDS: LUKE REILLY

RED STORM RISING

Mars. If you believe what the boffins are saying, we'll land a human expedition on it within the next 30 years or so. THQ, however, can have you there a lot sooner...



It's the evening after THQ's annual Gamer's Day in San Francisco, and *OPS* is tucked away in a French restaurant with a posse of Australian games journalists. We can't recall the name – probably something pretentious. We're currently mulling over exactly what the brown shit in our French onion soup could be and making generalisations about international press, but between extracting what may or may not be snot from our bowl of broth and poking fun at Germans one topic keeps coming back up – *Red Faction: Guerrilla*. More specifically, how incredible it is.

GET YOUR ASS TO MARS

We'll level with you immediately. We had real

concerns about this one. The first-person to third-person shift had us more than a little worried, and the fact that *Red Faction 2* was somewhat of a disappointment after the (literally) groundbreaking original didn't help either. We wanted it to blow our minds, but we just weren't sure it would. We approached the demo machines with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. It was the first game we played on the night because the suspense was killing us. The verdict? Read on. It's good.

RED DAWN

Guerrilla is a total departure from the roots of the series. What once was a more-or-less conventional, linear first-person shooter has become an ambitious, open-world third-person shooter. It's a

G



■ Mars or bust...



■ The mining walker makes short work of any structure

bit like *Mercenaries 2: World in Flames*, in space. *Mercenaries 2*, to be honest, along with, say, *Battlefield: Bad Company* are probably *Guerrilla*'s only competition when it comes to the immense level of destruction on offer in an open-world environment. It's probably too early to judge, but *Guerrilla* might just have the edge in that department.

For those of you that need a refresher, the original *Red Faction* took place on Mars, around the year 2075. With Earth running low on minerals, the Ultor Corporation has established a mining operation on Mars. All is not well, however, and atrocious living conditions,

plus a manmade disease known as The Plague (a side effect of nanotechnology research) lead to a rebellion. It was absolutely tops, and well received by critics. The sequel was a bit of a bust, a faster-paced on-rails affair set entirely on Earth that didn't live up to the standard of the original. *Guerrilla*, thankfully, marks both a return to the red planet and a return to form.

Set 50 years after the events of the original, players will assume the role of a freedom fighter with the re-established Red Faction movement and duke it out against the oppressive Earth Defence Force. Your struggle for liberation will

take you across vast tracts of Martian landscape, from the mining outpost of Parker (named, no doubt, after the hero of the first *Red Faction*) to the EDF capital city of Eos. There's been some speedy terraforming over the past half-a-century because the sky is blue, there's scattered vegetation across the windswept desert and there isn't an oxygen mask in sight. It seems like *Total Recall* crossed with *Mad Max*.

The gimmick though? Geo-Mod is back and, although Volition hasn't settled on a name for the new and improved system, this time it means business. You can destroy everything.

APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION

It's a tad unfair we describe it as a gimmick, really. It's taken four years to perfect and it's significantly more than a token smattering of rubble. Every structure you come across can be razed – walls, communication towers, water tanks, shacks, supply warehouses, pillboxes, barracks... if you can see it, you can smash it. It's immensely satisfying. The demo segment we played through several times started us with four weapons – an assault rifle, a rocket launcher, a sack full of satchel charges

■ "I don't really feel like heading home tonight – is it cool if I crash in your room?"



■ We hope this game has a pub in it. They could call it the Mars Bar. What? Why are you groaning?



LIFE ON MARS

Outside of Earth, Mars is really the only other planet on our Solar System that could support life. Mars has volcanoes, valleys, deserts and polar ice caps like Earth, and its rotational period and seasonal cycles are similar to those of good ol' Planet Earth.

Terraforming Mars wouldn't be cheap, and would require two major changes to the planet – building up the atmosphere and keeping it warm. The existing Martian atmosphere consists mainly of carbon dioxide, a known greenhouse gas. Once the planet began to heat (possibly with rockets full of compressed CFC – stay with us here) more CO₂ would heat the atmosphere from the frozen reserves on the poles. This means that the two processes of building the atmosphere and heating it would augment one another, and make terraforming easier. It seems likely that we'll see people land on Mars in our lifetime, but living on it? Maybe not.

■ Please, Volition. Bring back the rail gun!



and a sledgehammer. All of them, except the assault rifle, could be used to completely demolish every building we came across.

And we did. Swing the sledge into a wall and chunks of concrete shatter and tumble. Pump a rocket into an open room and debris mushrooms out in every direction. Deposit a wad of satchel charges inside a building and watch as the entire structure cascades in on itself. We went nuts, and we enjoyed every second. You don't even need to destroy a building outright before it collapses – bring down enough and the stress will take care of the rest. Hairline fractures will open up, dust spilling out, and the whole thing will come crashing down in a thick plume of grey soot and dust. With a little time (and we had quite a line behind us) you can really push the tech to its limit. Blow out a hole above you and bring down the roof around you – it's a hoot. Demolish the front and rear of a multi-storey structure and watch as the upper floors teeter on the still-intact centre supports before toppling over.

Better still, we found you can even drive vehicles straight through walls and buildings – which is handy for a quick gatecrash. We also discovered a great mech, which we commandeered

and promptly set about totally ruining everything. It was some kind of mining robot with great big swinging arms that chewed through concrete like warm butter. It even makes for a great, moveable tower – at any point you can hop out of the driver's seat and stand on the platform, firing away at anyone giving you grief.

We should point out that none of this destruction is scripted; it's

"Find the second floor filled with sharpshooters? Why risk a suicidal assault up the stairs when you can simply bring the second floor to you with a few satchel charges?"

completely dynamic. Few developers have nailed this level of environmental interaction. We also ought to mention that while we had a criminal amount of fun levelling buildings purely for the sake of it, we can assure you there's a great deal of depth on account of the destruction. Want to take out a mounted gun, but you find the access door is locked? Blow a hole in the wall! Is there a barrier between you and easy access to your objective? Drive through

it! The options become vast when you're able to shape your own path. Infiltrating enemy complexes doesn't have to be a matter of fighting your way through the front door – you'd be better off barging your way directly into the building itself with your trusty sledge. Or an APC. Find the second floor filled with sharpshooters? Why risk a suicidal assault up the stairs when you can simply bring the second floor to you

vehicle handling was surprisingly good too, especially since we found the driving physics in *Guerrilla's* stablemate, *Saints Row 2*, a tad too sticky for our liking. *Guerrilla's* oversized 4x4s and hulking APCs slide around the dusty roads with aplomb. Visually it's no slouch either – the screenshots really do this game justice. It's no mean feat considering the processing resources we imagine are burned through by the amazing evolution of Geo-Mod tech.

The missions we attempted on the night itself were fairly typical open-world fare – destroy this convoy, kill these punks, save these saps – but the multiple ways to tackle them made things a little more interesting. A mini-map makes reaching and finding new objectives simple. We're more than confident there'll be a host of missions that really exploit the unique nature of a planet like Mars and the explosive tech Volition has spent four years creating.

Red Faction: Guerrilla is one of those rare games that exceed one's expectations, and we're really looking forward to some more hands-on time with it. A true surprise packet, you'll be hearing plenty more about this one over the coming months. One of the PS2s first great shooters finally receives the sequel it deserves. **B**

GUERRILLAS IN THE MIST

It'd be remiss of us not to discuss the feel of the game itself, especially after such a drastic shift in perspective. Fortunately, we're happy to report it's very robust. The gunplay is sound, and there's a handy and intuitive automatic snap-to-cover system in place. The



PlayStation Portable

PlayStation 2



PIMPS
BURN RUBBER
GIMPS
EAT DIRT



ATV OFFROAD FURY 4

THE DIRTIER THE BETTER

It's not the winning that counts, it's the taking part. Break the rules, break some bones. Damage, destroy and demolish. Whatever it takes to be the last man standing.

PG

Mild coarse language

playstation.com.au



ATV Offroad Fury 3 and 4 are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. ATV Offroad Fury is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. K951949-0P54

ONLINE

The latest PS3 Network news, online reviews, reader online section and more!

CHECK OUT...

...all this juicy online goodness



MotorStorm 2

A genuine must see. While Evolution has been candid that this trailer is pre-rendered, it certainly gives us a solid idea of the direction this undoubtedly stellar sequel is headed. We're a lookin' and we're a likin'.



GT5: Prologue

Prologue is just about worth the money, considering that you get well over 15 hours of play (far more if you stick it out for the expensive cars). Tragically more than some full-priced games these days.



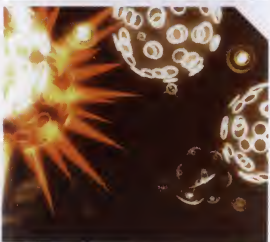
SingStar

Worth checking – to an extent. A couple of gems managed to get lost in yet another swathe of *SingStar* mediocrity. Billy Joel's 'We Didn't Start the Fire' is sure to entertain your dad, but that's it...



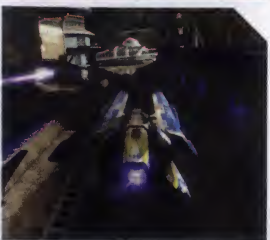
Stranglehold

A humongous monstrosity of an update that completely dwarves all other Downloadable Content packs on the market, and makes them look rather silly – 10 new maps, and 21 new playable characters!



fIOW

A nifty little expansion pack to the weirdly relaxing experience that is *fIOW*. Probably best restricted to huge fans of the original, but for those who adore this slick piece of work, download.



Wipeout HD

Check out our preview of this forthcoming title on the page opposite – but if a moving illustration this sharp and smooth update is required, hop onto the store and download the trailer online.

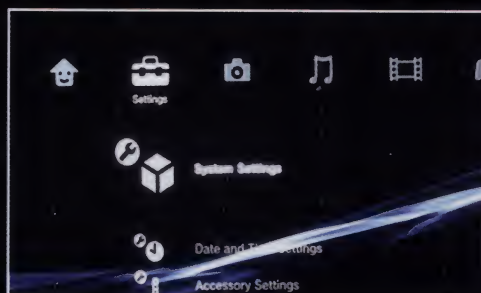
NEWS

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Since we last spoke there's been an epic amount of online 'updatage', resulting in more than a few random curse words being cast in the direction of our trusty PS3. But regardless of the wait, both these minor updates are 'for your own good', as our dear old mum used to say.

They mostly revolve around video playback, with movie files over 2GB now playable, providing they're in the correct format. In addition, wmv files (which the PS3 previously spat out like seeds in watermelon) are now playable – many of the longstanding issues with other avis have also been ironed out. After trying out a couple of files that failed to work previously, we found ourselves pretty satisfied with the latest update.

Now if they can just work out a fix for all those other files we totally *didn't* illegally download we'll be straight.



OOM TOKI!

PixelJunk Monsters fans (and there had better be some of you) rejoice yet again! We reported previously that an expansion was being worked upon, and it turns out those good people at Sony were telling us the truth – how refreshing!

The expansion comes in the form of a new

entire island of all dancin', all killin', chillin' like a villain, *PixelJunk Monster* action. We like. The island itself is called 'Toki', and plays host to some of the most complex (and kinda random) map layouts yet.

Those familiar with the original should be keeping a beady eye on this expansion for sure.



BURNOUT PARADISE

Run to paradise...

By all accounts *Burnout Paradise* didn't exactly get a fair crack of the whip. Sandwiched inbetween the 2007 Christmas season glut (*COD4* and *AC* in particular), and the slick hype machine for *MGS4* and *GTA* it seems many have forgotten about Criterion's flawed masterpiece.

And this lack of popularity – the fact that *Burnout Paradise* isn't quite as popular online as perhaps Alex Ward and his team envisioned – is possibly the only tangible flaw in what is one of the best implemented online experiences we've seen yet. It's almost as if the grand vision for *Burnout*, the sheer depth of the online leaderboards, and the huge amount of modes, is hampered by the fact that not quite enough people on your (and our) friend list seem to be playing the game.

But that being said, the implementation is still spectacular, by pressing right on the d-pad at any moment players can be automatically whisked away to the magical world of online gaming, and hop into a match almost instantly – starting pretty much from the exact same point you are at on the map. The freedom and scope is almost bewildering. When you hop back out of the match you'll hardly notice, since you will be at the exact same areas as you were previously – the line between online and offline is blurred almost indiscriminately.



So finding matches with randoms is easy, and almost perfectly executed – which makes it even more of a shame that Criterion's grand vision for a huge community constantly checking to beat each other's high scores and times has been scuppered by both a strange lack of gamers and, possibly, the overwhelming popularity of *Call of Duty 4*.

★★★★

ONLINE
REVIEW

WIPEOUT HD

Slide, slide, slippedy slide

When it comes to off-the-rails action, you could do far worse than indulge in a little dose of *WipeOut*. Along with *Ridge Racer*, *WipeOut* has been a dependable thoroughbred in the Sony stables for a number of years now, and it's not hard to figure out why. With graphics so crisp they'll sear your retinas, bumping electro beats, gravity defying racers and tracks, there was never a lot of depth to *WipeOut*, nor was there ever a need to be. Its simplicity had us coming back for more, and now those of you yet to experience the experience are in for a high definition treat.

Our first taste of *WipeOut HD* was like slipping on a pair of comfy old shoes. Crazy tracks, air-braking side to side, unforgiving and rapid decelerating collisions, and of course, all the little speed boost arrows and weapons pick ups you know and love. It's all about finding that perfect line and hoping to hell you don't bump into anything along the way, which is a hard ask, as you may find yourself drifting into a wall as you lovingly gaze at



the super sexy 1080p visuals.

At this point our only critique is on the track designs. We'd like to see some alternate routes or shortcuts ala the *Burnout* or *SSX* series to really launch this franchise into the stratosphere. That said, it's still looking pretty damn tidy, and with the addition of head to head online action, we're getting our flipper fingers ready to smoke any opposition. Who else is up for it?

PSN
PREVIEW

LOLGASM



The Office Call of Duty

So they're a bit behind the times (playing *Call of Duty 2* instead of the supreme *COD4*) but the thought is there. The best bit? When one player confesses to choosing the Sniper Rifle on an unsuitable map and his team mate screams: "The game is over, now I'm really going to kill you!"

Watch it at: <http://www.gamevideos.com/video/id/6721>

Or Google: Office Call of Duty



Everybody's Golf Upskirt

If it's wrong to sneak a peek up the skirts of those cute, hyper stylised chiquitas from *Everybody's Golf*, then we don't wanna be right. This video gets up close and maybe a little too personal with Sony's latest twee golfer. A bit of an eyebrow raiser for sure.

Watch it at: <http://www.gametrailers.com/player/usermovies/90544.html>

Or Google: Hot Shots Golf upskirt



Pole Position

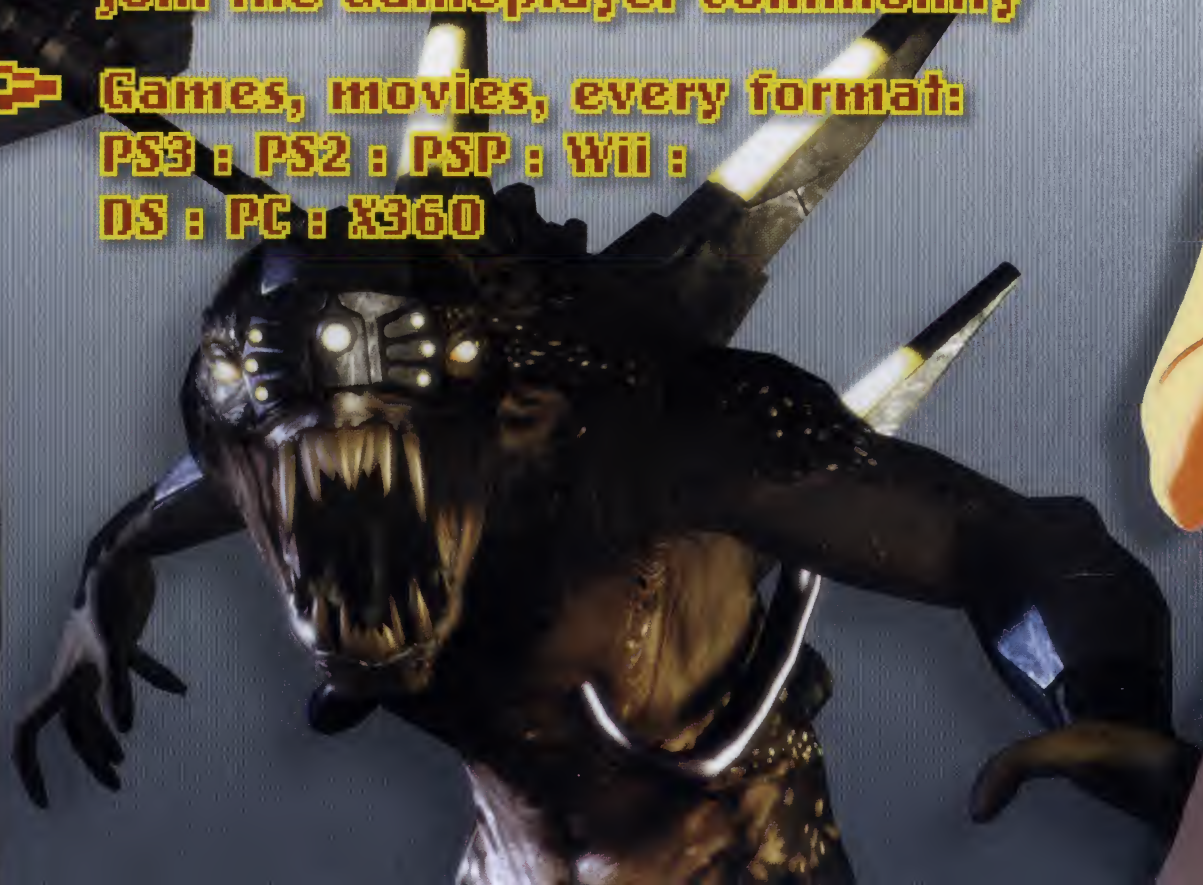
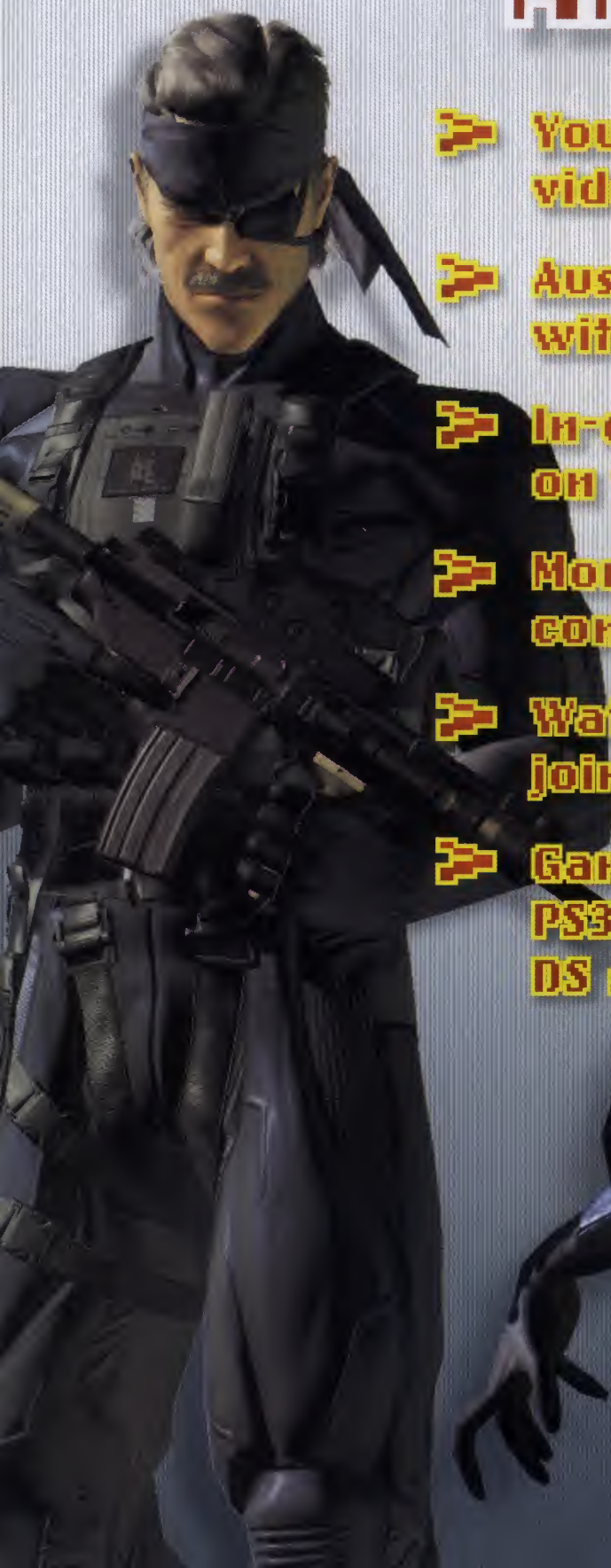
You may remember the cool real life 'space invaders' clip – this is another awesome video from the same team. This time they adapt their stop motion hi-jinx to *Pole Position*.

Watch it at: <http://www.techeblog.com/index.php/tech-gadget/video-stop-motion-pole-position>

Or Google: Stop Motion Pole Position

AUSTRALIA'S NO.1 SITE FOR GAMING NEWS AND REVIEWS

- Your portal to the world of video games and film
- Australia's top games journalists with unbeatable inside info
- In-depth reviews and previews on the latest games and movies
- More than 10 fantastic competitions each month!
- Watch trailers, get cheats and join the Gameplayer community
- Games, movies, every format:
PS3 : PS2 : PSP : Wii :
DS : PC : X360



gameplayer

Home

PS3

PS2

Xbox 360

Wii

DS

PSP

PC

Film

Forums

LOGIN

username

password

☐ Remember login

Login

[Forgot your password?](#)
[Click Here](#)

Register

NEWS | PREVIEWS | REVIEWS | FEATURES | MEDIA | TIPS & CHEATS

PlayStation®

Official Magazine - Australia

SUBSCRIBE NOW - CLICK HERE!

Latest...



Today's headlines

- EA fights piracy with soccer
- GT 5 Prologue vehicle list revealed
- GTA IV Hands-On
- RIP Gary Gygax
- Update: Assassin's Creed PC
- Guitar Hero III Double Pack Launch
- Mark Ecko does Dexter
- More WCC plushies on the way
- Assassin's Creed Battlestations Pack
- Week 31/03/08

PLUS:

LATEST SCREENSHOTS, TIPS & CHEATS, FEATURES, POLLS, BUSY FORUMS, CHARTS AND LOTS MORE!

AWESOME MOVIE AND DVD SECTION!

gameplayer.com.au

are you one?

LATEST PLAYSTATION RELEASES AVAILABLE AT:

BIG W



78⁸³
EVERYDAY LOW PRICE



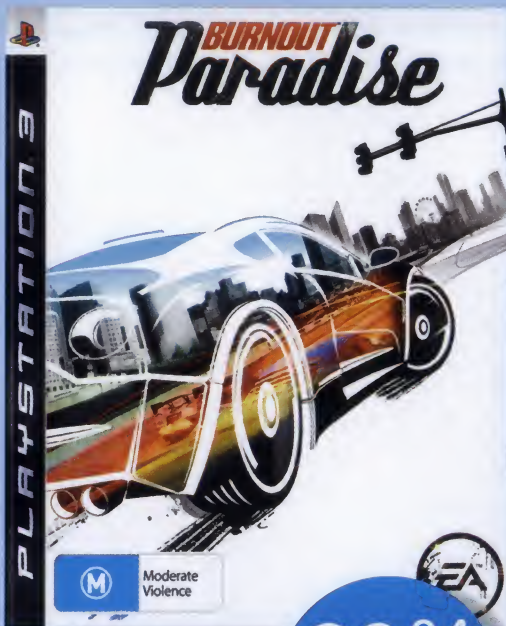
93⁸⁴
EVERYDAY LOW PRICE



93⁸⁴
EVERYDAY LOW PRICE



93⁸⁴
EVERYDAY LOW PRICE



93⁸⁴
EVERYDAY LOW PRICE



93⁸⁴
EVERYDAY LOW PRICE



For more game reviews, visit www.bigw.com.au

ADVERTISED MERCHANDISE POLICY BIG W MAKES EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE STOCK IS AVAILABLE WHEN ADVERTISED. HOWEVER, IF AN ITEM IS UNAVAILABLE WE'LL OFFER TO SELL YOU A COMPARABLE ITEM (IF AVAILABLE) WITH THE SAME REDUCTION IN PRICE AS THE ADVERTISED ITEM. SAVINGS MAY VARY SLIGHTLY TO THOSE SHOWN. SOME STYLES, COLOURS AND SIZES MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE AT ALL STORES. ACCESSORIES NOT INCLUDED. SOME LARGER ITEMS ARE SOLD BOXED AND REQUIRE ASSEMBLING. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO LIMIT PURCHASES TO REASONABLE RETAIL QUANTITIES. COMMERCIAL QUANTITIES NOT SUPPLIED.

THIS MONTH'S RELEASES PUT TO THE TEST

REVIEWS

in association with
BIGW

REVIEW RATINGS

01 Reserved for the very worst that developers have to offer. Essentially, anything that receives this score has no redeeming qualities whatsoever. A game receiving this score could not possibly be any worse, unless it was broken from the outset (or gave you cancer, or killed your dog). A game that should never have even survived its first pitch – as bad as it gets.

02 A terrible, terrible game. There may be one or two things about this game that work, or aren't actually broken, but they are so hopelessly outnumbered by the sheer quantity of badness that they basically cease to exist. Maybe it has a clever name, maybe the concept was sound – but virtually every single thing about it is bad beyond belief. Not worth the effort.

03 Very disappointing. A game with this score is fundamentally flawed in a number of extremely vital ways. There may be one or two things that could've been done somewhat worse than they have been, but for most part it's totally uninspired, boring and unappealing in every way. There are games that are worse, but there's not that many.

04 Poor. There may be parts of this game that are vaguely fun, and it may be robust enough in a few departments, but the overall package is lacking any significant reason to stick it out. Games receiving this score may show initial promise, or sound good at first, but will be unrefined, undercooked and let down by shoddy execution and poor attention to detail.

05 Mediocre. In the strictest terms, 50% is a pass – just unfortunately, a game receiving this score will have had just as many things go wrong with it as go right, and that really isn't enough to succeed. A game receiving this score will probably be entertaining in parts without excelling anywhere, yet equally sub-par in others without being outright awful.

06 Decent enough, although still lacking a certain something. A game receiving this score will be sound, but will have some fairly glaring faults and your interest will probably wane pretty quickly. It will have a number of limitations that will probably turn off more than a few gamers, but will get just enough right to keep dedicated fans of the genre ploughing through.

07 Good. A robust, fun game that's well worth a look, although will only rarely amaze. A game receiving this score will have more or less accomplished nearly all it set out to do in a decent fashion, but it will have some noticeable problems that prevent it from being as good as it could be. Nevertheless, they generally won't ruin the overall gaming experience.

08 Great. A game receiving this score comes highly recommended. A combination of some odd issues, minor problems or a lack of innovation may hamper it somewhat, but the overall impression it leaves is very positive. Very entertaining, very satisfying and you wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to others. Well ahead of the pack in most departments.

09 Excellent. Outstanding in almost every way. Some negligible blemishes will just keep it from being held aloft as a true masterpiece, but it is very likely the best in its field. Most elements of this game will be truly remarkable and you'll be hard-pressed to find too many other games of greater quality. An astonishing game that leaves all but the very best behind.

10 Incredible. Everything went right during the creation of this game. A game receiving a perfect 10 does not necessarily mean it is perfect, likely just teasingly close, but to reserve 10s for THE perfect game is pointless. Instead, a 10 represents a game of gobsmacking brilliance, a game that stands high above the rest and a game that you cannot afford to ignore. A masterpiece

THE OPS AWARDS



The Gold Award
is a rare gem and only to be given to games that score that magic 10/10. This score indicates gaming of simply incredible quality!



The Silver Award
is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!



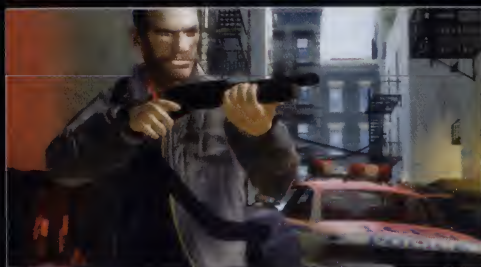
The Bronze Award
is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

OPS REVIEW SETUP



We choose to review our games on a super-slick Full HD 1080p 40" Bravia X-series for the best picture possible. This sucker melts eyeballs...

INSIDE...



GRAND THEFT AUTO IV

Un-frickin-believable – page 74



ARMY OF TWO

They're just good friends... honest! – page 80



TURNING POINT: FALL OF LIBERTY

The great idea is only step one of the process – page 82

■ **GENRE:** OPEN-WORLD
 ■ **RELEASE:** APRIL 2008
 ■ **DEVELOPER:** ROCKSTAR NORTH
 ■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ROCKSTAR

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-16
 ■ **PRICE:** \$119.95
 ■ **HD:** 720p
 ■ **WEB:** www.rockstargames.com

■ **BACK STORY:** The King is back, with the long awaited *Grand Theft Auto IV*. After blowing the gaming world to shreds in the last generation, Rockstar is all set to do the exact same thing all over again with its latest effort.

■ "The roof, the roof... I mean the cars, the cars are on fire..."

GRAND THEFT AUTO IV

Worth the wait? Hell yes...

PlayStation®
 Official Magazine Australia
GOLD AWARD
 10/10

Let's put it out there from the very beginning, from the first sentence: *Grand Theft Auto IV* might just be the best game in the series, a game eons ahead of the competition. In some ways, many ways even, we almost feel sorry for every other game that has the misfortune of being released after it. We're talking about a game so ahead of its time that we're having difficulty explaining it to ourselves, let alone putting it on print.

Remember that one kid in class that towered above the rest, who had a powerful thatch of man-hair on his chest before anyone even understood

what that really meant?

That's *Grand Theft Auto IV*.

How about that girl who had a pendulous pair of sweater puppets attached to her chest while the rest of the girls were still playing hop scotch in training bras?

That's *Grand Theft Auto IV*.

This is a game that leaps and bounds ahead of its peers, a game roughly about two or three years ahead of the curve. *GTAIV*'s voice has broken into a booming bellow that spells doom for every game unfortunate enough to follow it. Loud and clear, above the squeaking adolescent voices that make

up the rest of the industry, *GTAIV*'s message is clear: "Move over ladies - daddy's back..."

Daddy is back.

THE LEAP OF FAITH

The last major step forward for the *GTA* franchise was undoubtedly the huge leap into the third dimension. Gamers imploded and brains were thoroughly fried when gamers got a sense of the scope and scale of Rockstar's living, breathing 3D city - with realistic day/night cycles and the almost infinite sense of freedom that came from being

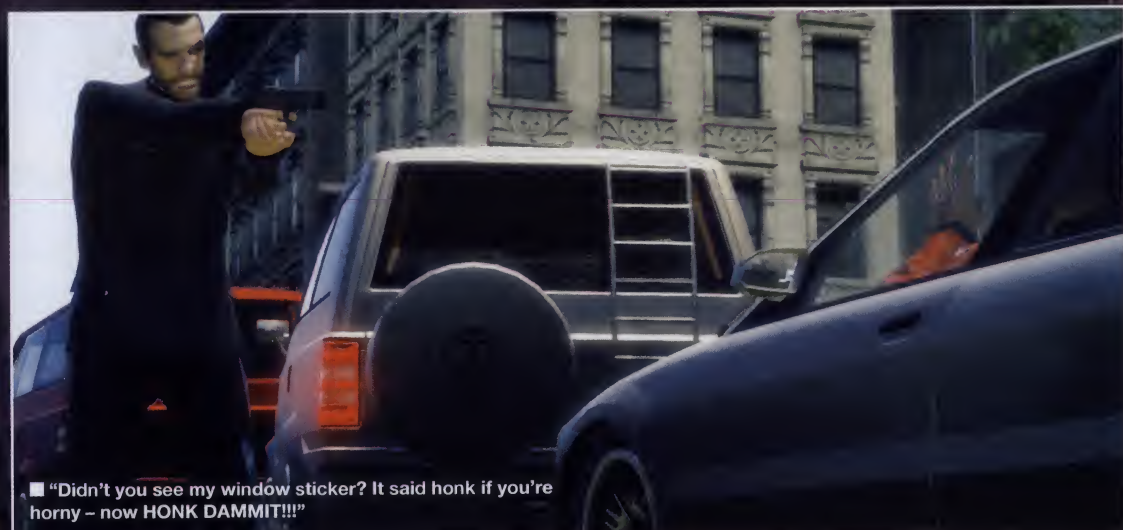




■ "Shit, the fashion police... these guys shoot to kill, man"



■ "My wife... she is dead"



■ "Didn't you see my window sticker? It said honk if you're horny - now HONK DAMMIT!!!"

able to do whatever you liked, was a genuine revelation.

So what now - how does one top that dimensional leap? Rockstar claimed it wanted *GTA IV* to be just as big a move forward as its predecessor was. Unless Rockstar decides to build a flux capacitor and tear the time-space continuum a new arsehole, it probably won't be traversing the fourth dimension any time soon. So how in the bluest of blue hells can Rockstar make *GTA IV* as big a jump forward as its third iteration?

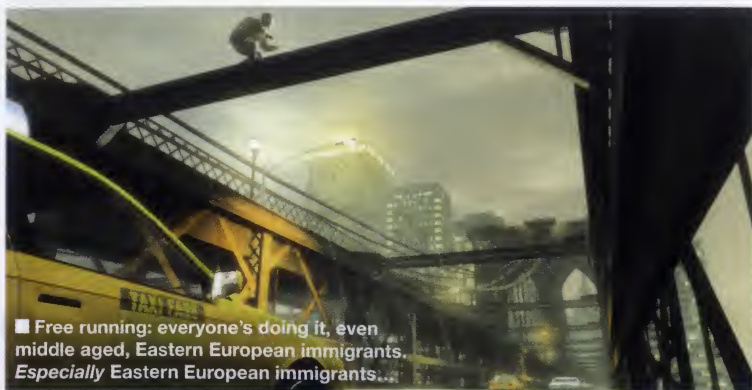
Well, believe us when we say that, somehow, Rockstar North has managed it. *Grand Theft Auto IV* is as bold a move forward as *GTA III* ever was. But describing the whys and wherefores of this leap is the difficult part. It's a major cop out, but when you play it, you'll understand.

NEW JACK CITY

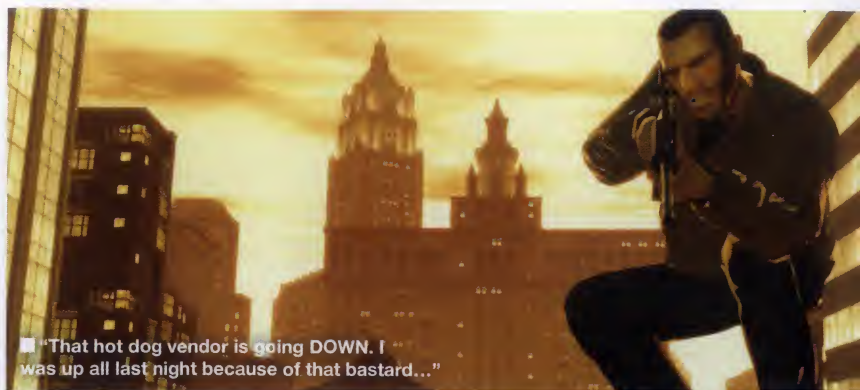
GTA IV's leap essentially comes from depth. You could say previous *GTA*s suffered from a perennial lack of depth. Yes, *San Andreas* featured a

State-sized sandbox for you to play in, but the gameplay itself always seemed thinly spread, almost as if the gameplay mechanics couldn't match Rockstar's colossal ambition. The cities were large, but could feel empty.

Grand Theft Auto IV, however, suffers no such issues. Liberty City is teeming with life, but more importantly the life within the city rings true. No longer do you feel like the sole inhabitant of an environment inhabited by drones - there's a real sense that the world could exist without your



■ Free running: everyone's doing it, even middle aged, Eastern European immigrants. Especially Eastern European immigrants...



■ "That hot dog vendor is going DOWN. I was up all last night because of that bastard..."



■ Get to the CHOPPAH! We mean, DRIVE AWAY FROM THE CHOPPAH!

"Our first trip to Algonquin rendered us almost childlike, gawking out the taxi window as we saw the high rises, the moon sparkling off the river, full of that tangible sense of wonder..."

presence; that you're ultimately part of something bigger.

Examples? Police arresting others for their trespasses as you scoot past in a stolen vehicle, sitting in a taxi cab watching two pedestrians duke it out on the street over some random issue, upcoming rappers in the projects bragging over their new record deal, buskers tooting their horn on street corners, homeless people eking out an existence underneath the towering bridges. No longer are you the sole source of personality and vice in the city, merely a small part of it – and it's a simultaneously humbling and awe-inspiring feeling.

The city itself is breathtaking, not necessarily in the texture work, but the scale of it all. Sitting inside a cab and simply taking in the sights is an inspiring experience in itself. Our first trip to Algonquin rendered us almost childlike, gawking out the

taxi window as we saw the high rises, the moon sparkling off the river, full of that tangible sense of wonder that arises when you visit a large city for the first time. For that feeling to exist within a video game setting is a stellar achievement to say the least.

NIKO

At the centre of it all is Niko, one of the most intriguing and charismatic protagonists in recent gaming history. After the first *GTA IV* trailer was released the world could have been forgiven for its initial, "WTF BORAT!?" reaction, but after playing through the game we wouldn't have it any other way. The swagger in Niko's style is evident from the moment he takes his first step in Liberty City – and that badass bravado compounds throughout the game to the point where you ultimately step back and say: Niko may just be the most



■ "What donut should I get later?" thought the cop
"Maybe I'll get sprinkles..."

compelling lead in gaming history.

Niko's world is accessed in the most modern of ways, via his mobile phone, resulting in a paradox of a HUD that, as opposed to rudely removing you from the game world, actually immerses you even further into its wily clutches. At the beginning of *GTAIV* your only contact is your cousin Roman, but by the end you'll have an entire network of contacts that can contact you at any time – for a mission, a casual death threat or two, or possibly just to go out on the piss.

So, in a sense, *GTAIV* goes outside the realm of its sandbox, criminal roots and really extends itself, becoming more of a 'city life' simulator. You could be in the midst of a mission, stalking your prey inside a grimy project building, and your phone may

just randomly go off – a female friend looking for a second date, or a buddy looking to shoot some pool.

You must decide whether or not to take that call, a decision that has some very real consequences within the game world – if you don't return your girlfriend's call she'll be far less likely to go out with you again, and you sure as hell won't be getting lucky next time round.

And this is just scratching the surface. *GTA* is, without a single shadow of a doubt, the most ambitious video game project ever undertaken – the fact that they've pulled it off is nothing short of miraculous.

EUPHORIC

Then we get to the Euphoria engine – which is a whole different ballgame.

From the simplest of movements (the way Niko sways when he turns into corners when running) to the most complicated (the resulting carnage from shoving a rocket up the arse of a team of goons) every movement rings true. And while these may seem like minor details, the difference this makes to the feel of the game is immeasurable.

Let's put it all together for a second: if you place a character, whose movements feel and look right into a brilliantly designed world that simultaneously reacts to, and is independent of, that character, with NPCs, whose reactions to your choices as a player make perfect sense within that world, then absolutely everything you do within that scenario becomes a joyous act of discovery – to the extent

■ Shooting at stuff – everyone should do it at least once



MULTIPLAYER MADNESS

And the multiplayer... oh, the multiplayer! So awesome. Believe it or not, as opposed to creating new self-contained multiplayer maps, Rockstar has placed the multiplayer segment of *GTAIV* within Liberty City itself. You can isolate certain parts of the city, or have the action take place across the entire city! We got the chance to check out some of *GTA*'s 14 brand new modes.



TEAM DEATHMATCH

Exactly what it says on the tin, except the object of deathmatch is to collect cash, as opposed to racking up kills. You get monetary rewards for killing the opposing team, but there are other ways of collecting the cold hard lucre...



COPS AND CROOKS

One team plays the crooks, and one plays the cops. The crooks must get to a vehicle at some point in Liberty City, while the coppers have to stop them. The cops have the crooks on radar, but not the location, vice versa for the crooks.



TEAM MAFIYA WORK

No it's not a spelling mistake – get off our backs, jeez! This is mission-based team game that takes place across the entire city. You get a call informing you of your mission, and players must rush to the location and get busy. Absolutely chaotic.



GTA RACE

A basic race across a specified part of the city, but made incredibly fun due to the awesome physics of the vehicles. Your car is guaranteed to explode at least once, so you can shoot your adversaries from their vehicle on foot if you so desire.

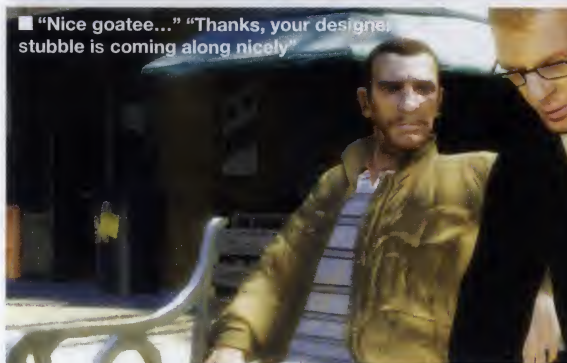


■ Stupid garbos – they make so much more money than we do. Damn it...

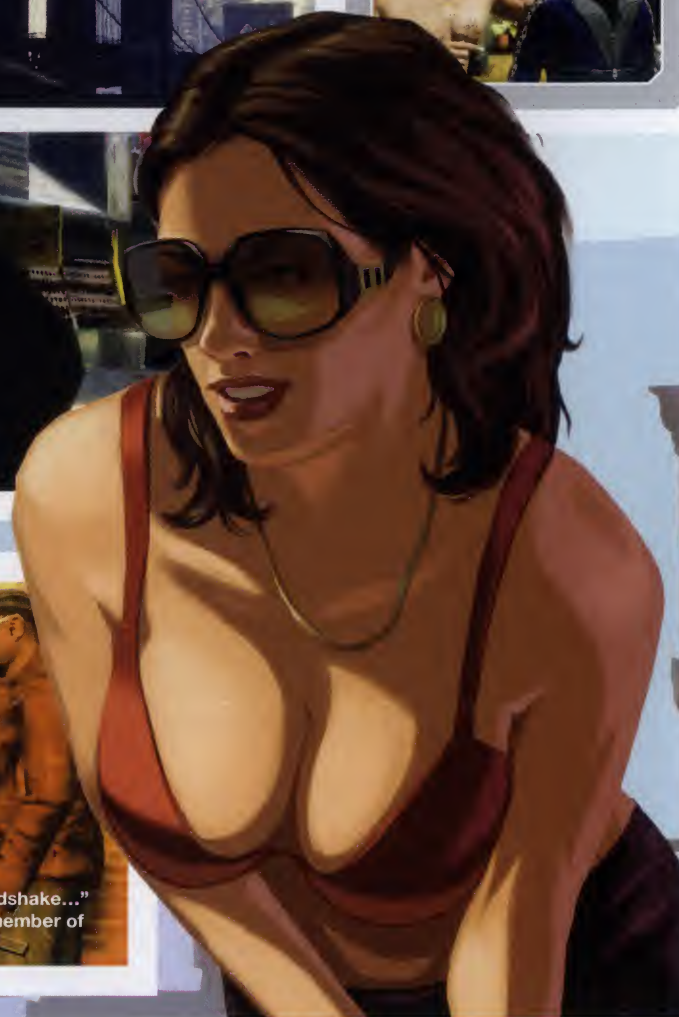


NEXT LEVEL

GTA has easily the most cohesive story in the series – combining the humour found in previous iterations with a new found grime and realism. We won't say too much about the specifics, but the voice acting and the character models themselves really bring a whole new level of storytelling to the franchise. Trust us, you'll be blown away.



■ "Nice goatee..." "Thanks, your designer stubble is coming along nicely"



that merely walking up the street seems like the most badass thing ever.

And when you combine this feeling with more complicated things – like shooting someone point blank in the face, robbing a bank with your crew, or rushing away from the scene of the crime in a speedboat – well, now you're getting an idea of why *GTAIV* is such a huge leap ahead of its predecessors.

THE BRASS TACKS

Speaking as someone who had their fair share of issues with previous *GTA* games, with regards to the core gameplay mechanics – we're glad to report that, outside a few choice niggles, pretty much every problems you may have had with the *GTA* control system has been rectified.

GTA's notoriously crusty targeting system has been the major focus of the overhaul. Following the success of *Gears of War*, Rockstar must have been mightily tempted to just rip off its cover system and 'over-the-shoulder' shooting style, but it hasn't – and the result is a cover system and aiming system that feels familiar, but is light years ahead of previous *GTA*s.

And while it's difficult to pin down exactly what aspects of driving have been changed, the end result is as clear as a bell: it simply feels better. Steering isn't anywhere near as clumsy, the damage models have been cranked up several notches, and each vehicle feels noticeably different.

Some of the traditional *GTA* issues do surface – the lock on system can be temperamental, and the driving camera can often frustrate (especially during



■ "Um I've forgotten our secret handshake..."
"What, already! You're no longer a member of team awesome, man. You're OUT"

the frantic 'three point turn to escape the cops') but they seem like minor complaints consider the gargantuan effort that has gone into tweaking almost all the major issues previous *GTA*s suffered from.

The frame rate is probably the game's only significant flaw. It rarely impacts gameplay in the same way *Assassin's Creed* did, but isn't exactly butter smooth either. At high speeds, with a plethora of cops in tow, it can often become downright sluggish, chugging along during some of the more intense gunfights.

But in many ways it's testament to the sheer bravado and ambition of Rockstar. *Grand Theft Auto IV* pushes next gen hardware to breaking point with a game that's almost too good to be true. It's a game that's every bit as

ground breaking as *GTAIII* was, but in many ways even its predecessor is a limp comparison.

Because essentially, no game has come close to creating a world anything like Liberty City – a fully realised environment that is so consistent, yet so in-depth; a gargantuan, sprawling city-scape that still somehow manages to indulge in the little things and make every single inch of game space worth exploring. You would have to go back to the N64 and *The Ocarina of Time* (routinely

named as the best game ever made) to find a game that was so advanced for its time, so ahead of the pack in that one respect.

And *Grand Theft Auto IV*, without a single shadow of a doubt, deserves to be mentioned in same breath as that classic. It's a game that 'ten out of ten' was designed for – a game that takes your rising, constantly spiralling expectations and vapourises them with a product so sublime that you'll tell your grandkids about it.

All time. **Mark Serrels**

PROS:

- Incredibly rich world
- Huge leap for gaming

CONS:

- Some graphical niggles
- Frame rate can clunk

VERDICT: The scope and scale of *GTAIV* is beyond anything gaming has ever had to offer.

OFFICIAL
SCORE:

10



"PS" and "PLAYSTATION" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "SOCOM" is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. All rights reserved. SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs: Tactical Strike © 2007 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by Slant Six Games Inc. The U.S. Navy provided technical support, but does not officially endorse this product. All rights reserved. s100122-0000

FIRE AT WILL. STEALTH KILL.
FIELD OF FIRE.
BREACH STEALTH
ALPHA TEAM MOBILE
HOLD FIRE. BRAVO TEAM GET MOVING.
MOVE OUT.
SUPPRESSING FIRE.
MOVE AND FIRE.
ATTACK TARGET.
BRAVO TEAM GET MOVING.
SNIPER

EVALUATE. PLAN. EXECUTE.

THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK. YOUR BRAIN IS THE DEADLIEST WEAPON YOU HAVE. FOUR SOLDIERS LIVES ARE IN YOUR HANDS. THEY WILL FOLLOW YOUR COMMANDS ONLY, SO MAKE NO MISTAKES. TAKE CONTROL ONE OF NINE SPECIAL FORCES TEAMS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE AND TEST YOURSELF AGAINST THE BEST IN THE WORLD WITH ONLINE PLAY. OR PIT YOUR WITS AGAINST 3 FRIENDS, CLOSE UP AND PERSONAL, WITH AD-HOC MODE. HOWEVER YOU PLAY YOU MUST ALWAYS EVALUATE THE ENEMY, PLAN YOUR ATTACK, THEN EXECUTE WITH pinpoint accuracy. REMEMBER, THE BEST OF THE BEST ARE IN YOUR HANDS.



Moderate battle violence

SOCOM
U.S. NAVY SEALs

TACTICAL STRIKE

www.socom-hq.com



■ **GENRE:** ACTION
■ **RELEASE:** NOW
■ **DEVELOPER:** EA MONTREAL
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** EA

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-4
■ **PRICE:** \$99.95
■ **HD:** 720p
■ **WEB:** www.ea.com/armyoftwo

■ **BACK STORY:** *Army of Two* has undergone several changes while kicking back in the pre-release pipeline. Notably the CPR mini game that featured both characters pressing a set number of buttons in time didn't make it into the retail release.

INFO BYTE

Art imitates life! A PMC mentioned in the story is Black Mountain, an obvious jab at one of the largest real PMCs in the world – the US's Blackwater Worldwide.

■ MASTER BLASTER! MASTER BLASTER! (Whoops, wrong movie)

ARMY OF TWO

A pair of angry manchops save the world... for cash

A two-man tag team tour de boom, *Army of Two* shows that a game needn't be brilliant if it comes out at the right time. Co-operative games have been the 'it' girl of the season and EA's latest has wisely positioned itself as the defining panty-less pictorial. That's not to say it lives purely on its marketing sorcery – on its own merits it's a robust game of 'bullet-hole the bad guy' made for two smoking guns. There's nothing wrong with that. Problem is *Army of Two* plays it safe in its overall execution.

Not so restrained is the topical storyline. Like *MGS4* and *Haze*, *Army of Two* concerns itself with the privatisation of military might. The game's two brick-munching leads, Tyson and Rios, are ex

army commandos recruited into the SSC, a leading Private Military Corporation (PMC) who outsource muscle to the US for a lot of zeroes. As the war of ideas on PMCs rages, Tyson and Rios find themselves set up and marked for death as they're sucked into a globe-hopping conspiracy. Yes, it's B-grade fluff, the sort of story Wesley Snipes or Steven Seagal headline regularly. But so what? This isn't literature appreciation class, this is a blood-spraying video game packed with brutes who wear vandalised hockey masks as they puncture their enemies with hellfire lead. Could it have been better? Absolutely. Will anyone care? No.

Apart from the story, what *Army of Two* bothers to do, it does well. As the

name suggests each mission sees you team up with either the AI or a buddy to scramble through a third-person blastathon. Unlike the popcorn story, the game migrates over to the realm of reality when the bullets start flying. Cover is essential in *Army of Two*. Mid melee the amount of fire darting around you is akin to being trapped in a chick's clothing shop during the January sales. It's madness. The only way to survive is to keep your head down and use the cover-and-shoot system.

Like in *Uncharted*, the combat is all about cringing behind objects and popping out to spray lead at your enemies. While a few games have used a similar system before, *Army of Two*'s stab



■ "ARGH MY EARS!"

■ "Hey man, do we really need to wear these sweaty masks, it's real hot in here and my goggles are all steamy!" "I though you liked it hot, sweaty, and steamy!"



■ Dwarves... they get horny



"Is it more satisfying than a hot tub full of cheerleaders? It gets close."

is the most efficient yet as it seamlessly blends with the game's other innovation.

It's called aggro! This is all about manipulating the AI to enhance the whole "I'll draw their fire while you swing around and wedgie them from the rear" mechanic. One player bunks down and fires away like an emo college kid to build up aggro and draw enemy attention, while the second player goes for a flanking run. It's the stock standard move in *Army of Two*'s playbook and is necessary if you want to get past some of the heavily armoured enemies and big cheese terrorists. In fact, whip up enough aggro and you'll be able to engage Overkill mode. Here, the aggressor pimps himself into a 'double-the-damage tank on legs' while the support player turns invisible and skanks around breaking backs. Is

it more satisfying than a hot tub full of cheerleaders? It gets close.

Unfortunately that's as deep as *Army of Two* gets. While we have no problem with simple games, we do have beef with wasted potential. We're not sure if it was a case of the limitations of having co-op so tightly integrated into the game, but the levels in *Army of Two* are lethargically linear. It's an odd thing to mope about in a game that looks as sharp and attractive as this one, but it feels entirely on rails. Interactivity is weak too – sure there are a few explosive barrels to shoot, but other than that everything else is bolted down and lifeless. For a game that wallows in hurricanes of fiery bullets the levels needed to take a page out of *Stranglehold* and go for more interactivity.

More annoying still is that materials

don't behave as they should. It's become the norm in most games that if an enemy is cowering behind a wooden crate you can still pepper them with an AK-47.

That's not the case in *Army of Two* where every loose piece of anything suddenly has the atomic composition of titanium. Assigning materials their due qualities would also have generated more strategy to the title – an element that would've given the repetitive fire fights a boost.

It's also clear EA didn't quite capitalise on the co-op angle as much as they should have. Apart from some cool hovercraft and parachuting moments where one player drives and the other shoots, there needed to be more interesting levels, boss fights, and objectives to make the game seem like more than an interconnected bunch of shoot outs.

No, *Army of Two* is not perfect, but as we mentioned at the start of the review it's a case of it being good enough at the right time. As a single-player game it can't match the richness of *Call of Duty 4*, but along with *Rainbow Six Vegas 2* it's the only way to score some solid online co-op loving. If you've got a buddy who's keen to jump on the wagon with you, buy it without hesitation. **James Ellis**

BACK TO BACK BOOM TIME

What happens when you're part of a two-man death squad but you get surrounded from all sides by insane terrorists out to kill you like disco? Just go 'back to back' and everything will work out. At least that's what happens in *Army of Two*. At scripted points in the game time slows down and you and your gun buddy get inundated by charging gunmen as you both swivel on the spot amassing a higher body count than heart disease. Hey – don't knock it – the technique might just save your life one day buddy...



PROS:

- Best co-op game out.
- Characters are a hoot

CONS:

- Elementary level design
- Needed more variety

VERDICT: Near enough is good enough. Solid co-op thrills make up for wasted potential.

OFFICIAL
SCORE:
07

■ **GENRE:** SHOOTER
■ **RELEASE:** NOW
■ **DEVELOPER:** CODEMASTERS
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ATARI

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-4
■ **PRICE:** \$119.95
■ **HD:** 720p
■ **WEB:** www.turningpointgame.com

■ **BACK STORY:** Spark Unlimited, founded by former developers from the Medal of Honor franchise, are best known for the top-notch *Call of Duty: Finest Hour* for PS2. The company is wholly owned by employees, so it's a shame this game sucks.



TURNING POINT: FALL OF LIBERTY

Willkommin to Amerika


It's been a while since we've been so looking forward to a game's release, and been so bitterly disappointed after playing it. *Turning Point: Fall of Liberty* takes you from ecstasy to agony within the first few minutes, and it doesn't get much better the further you progress through it. Now you guys know it's not like us to just tag and bag a game, just for the heck of it, but this reminded us of our high school report cards. You know, the one where your teacher remarked "never lived up to his full potential" and "needs to focus more". Trips down memory lane aside, this doesn't even come close to what we were expecting. Read on to find out why.

The Ecstasy. In 1931 Winston Churchill was brushed by a taxi leaving him with a limp for the rest of his natural life. But what if it didn't just brush him? What if it sent him on a trip to the Pearly

Gates? There'd be no rousing speeches, no call to arms, no rallying of Allied Forces. The end result? Goose-steppers in ze Whitehouse. That's right, ze Germans invade the US of A. It's a genius concept, and the idea alone had us salivating. It put a new slant on the fading WWII genre, and could have been a killer IP if it wasn't so shonkily put together.


The agony. Where to begin? Half arsed really doesn't even begin to describe it. Your basic movement feels stunted and clunky, with a lot of glitchy oh-crap-I'm-stuck moments that really detract from game play and tend to piss you off after a while. There are several interactive actions like climbing ladders (with ) or climbing over objects (with ). Why bother separating the two and just have a uniform action button? We're big fans of simple control systems that enhance the immersive experience, rather

than detract from it.

Don't get us started on the weapons fire. Most guns have serious recoil, almost to the point where you can't get several shots off at the same Kraut. Then using  to target is almost useless, as the pronounced muzzle flash obscures your crosshair, and you don't know if you've axed the bad guys or not. Enemy AI is all over the shop, and your allies don't seem to do anything other than get shot. Graphically, there's nothing noteworthy to report. Character models are fairly simplistic by today's standards, and the overall look is a little grainy.

We loved the concept so damn much, and really didn't want to slam it, but the execution was shoddy in almost every aspect. A couple more months on the drawing board may have saved it, but as it stands now, it is a mere shell of what it could have been. **— Dave Kozicki**

KRAUT KEVLAR

One redeeming aspect of *Turning Point* was the human shield aspect. Sneaking up behind any enemy Kraut and hitting  allows you to grapple with your enemy. You then hit the D-pad to choose the type of kill (environmental to throw them off a building, etc.), but you can also drag them along as a bullet-proof vest and let them soak up enemy fire. We've always said that Nazis make damn fine Kevlar!

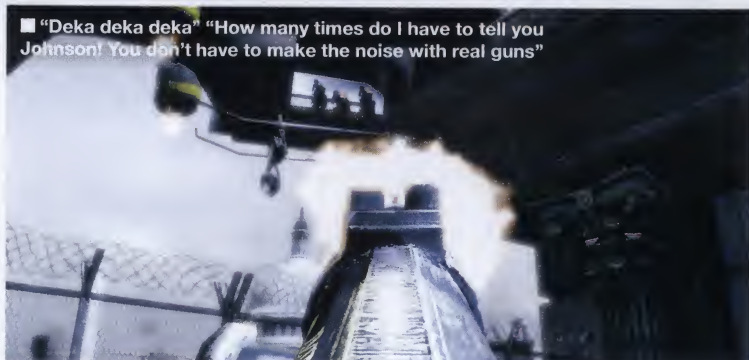


INFO BYTE

For an alternate history angle that kicks serious arse, try the PS2 classic *Freedom Fighters* instead.



■ Zeppelins are awesome – why did they stop making them? Oh, that's right, they kept exploding...



■ "Deka deka deka" "How many times do I have to tell you Johnson! You don't have to make the noise with real guns"



■ New York, New York, New York is on fire...

PROS:

- Killing Nazis: always cool
- Brilliant idea...

CONS:

- ...very poorly executed
- What's the opposite of fun??

OFFICIAL
SCORE:

04

VERDICT: Scheisse from start to finish. Such a great concept, such a shame...

Casino



GAME701



GAME702



GAME703

Action/Adventure



GAME704



GAME705



GAME706



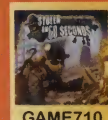
GAME707



GAME708



GAME709



GAME710



GAME711



GAME712



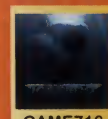
GAME713



GAME714



GAME715



GAME716



GAME717



GAME718



GAME719



GAME720



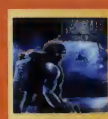
GAME721



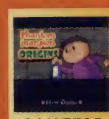
GAME722



GAME723



GAME724



GAME725



GAME726



GAME727



GAME728



GAME729



GAME730



GAME731



GAME732



GAME733

Sport



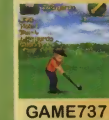
GAME734



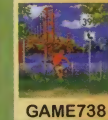
GAME735



GAME736



GAME737



GAME738



GAME739



GAME740



GAME741



GAME742



GAME743



GAME744



GAME745



GAME746



GAME747



GAME748

Puzzle/Strategy



GAME749



GAME750



GAME751



GAME752



GAME753



GAME754



GAME755



GAME756



GAME757



GAME758



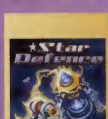
GAME759



GAME760



GAME761



GAME762



GAME763



GAME764



GAME765



GAME766



GAME767



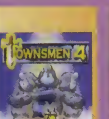
GAME768



GAME769



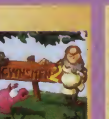
GAME770



GAME771



GAME772



GAME773



GAME774

WWW.MAD4GAMES.COM.AU

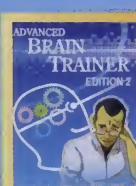
NO SUBSCRIPTIONS!

MAD 4 GAMES AUSTRALIA

Top Games



GAME775



GAME776



GAME777



GAME778



GAME779



GAME780

TEXT CODE TO 191 623* Example
TXT GAME701
TO 191 623*

* You will be charged \$0.55 for every message sent to 191 623 and \$6.60 for each game purchased. No game content provided after 9:00am AEST on 30.05.08. Your operator may charge for data transactions according to your service agreement. Service is subject to GPRS coverage, handset compatibility & network availability. Handset must be WAP & GPRS enabled. Under 15 you need the account holder's permission. Full terms, conditions & handset compatibility at www.mad4games.com.au/tandcs/opsmo608.html. You will receive marketing messages via SMS. Help at www.mad4games.com.au, info@mad4games.com.au or 1300 854 244. Available on Australian networks: Telstra, Optus, Vodafone & Virgin Mobile. All trademarks or registered trademarks are recognized as the property of their respective holders © 2008 Mad4Games Australia Pty Ltd. All rights reserved. Mad4Games, Mad4Games Australia & the Mad4Games Australia Logo are trademarks of Mad4Games Australia Pty Ltd.

PS3 PS2 PSP REVIEW

■ **GENRE:** SPORTS
■ **RELEASE:** NOW
■ **DEVELOPER:** CLAP HANZ
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** SONY

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-4 (2-8 ONLINE)
■ **PRICE:** \$99.95
■ **HD:** 720p
■ **WEB:** au.playstation.com

■ **BACK STORY:** The *Everybody's Golf* series has always been well-liked as a game whose humble elements combine into something greater than the whole. When this version was released in Japan it sold 150,000 copies in its first week.



■ Tartan trousers – one of many items of clothing that can only be worn on the golf course...



■ "...and after you sink this putt you can come back to my place and ride me cowboy" "Actually, I'm an asexual hermaphrodite" "Oh. Weird"

INFO BYTE

The online lobby system handles up to 50 players and is rendered in 3D – a taste of PlayStation Home to come?

EVERYBODY'S GOLF: WORLD TOUR

Everybody wants to rule the world... we mean, play golf

Who knew golf was so easy? All the people who've been playing the *Everybody's Golf* games for the last ten years for starters – it's just a simple matter of hitting ⊗, ⊗ and ⊗. Easy!

Really and truly, this game is a breeze to play. Novices will have little trouble jumping right in, and instruction manuals are entirely optional. You can play using the 'three click' method and never bother with the game's other nuances and have a great time. Or you can dig deeper and also have a great time. It's up to you.

The three clicks will, in order, start your swing, end your swing and determine how sweetly you connect with the ball. But for the series' first PS3 instalment there's a significant new tweak: Advanced Shot mode.

In Traditional mode, the first button press starts a marker moving along a gage; the second click stops it and determines your shot's power; and the third has to be timed as the marker moves through the sweet spot indicator.

Advanced shot is basically the same, but there's no gauge – you just have to watch your on-screen character. The first click starts a swing; the second stops it (there's a blink of light as you pass halfway and a 'ghost' image of your club at full swing to help you gauge where you're at); and the third has to be timed carefully as a circle zeroes in on

the ball to indicate a precise hit.

And that's it! You can manually select your clubs, of course, and add top- or back-spin, hook or slice to your shot. This gives you quite a deal of control over your shots but best of all, you don't necessarily need to use it to get good results.

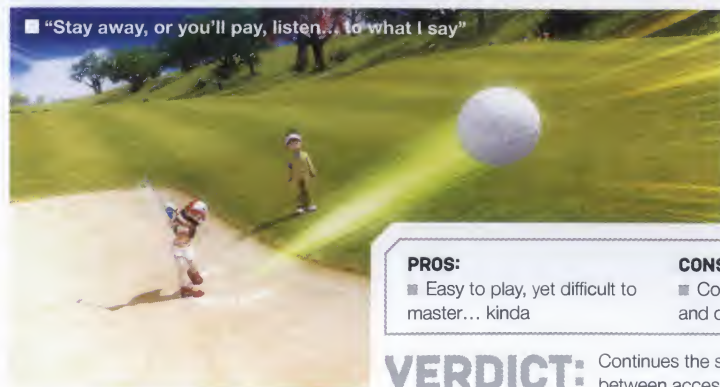
In keeping with the game's 'arcadey' feel, the graphics and sound are not so much cutesy as charming, with crowds politely clapping and the game encouraging you whenever you make a particularly good shot. It all looks great, incidentally, with plenty of detail on the courses and perfectly-judged character animations.

As you play through the events (spread over six courses with 15

playable characters and seven caddies) you'll earn extra outfits, abilities and equipment, giving the game a degree of customisation, though it's all pretty lightweight. We'd love to see these options expanded – which is surely a no-brainer, with three new characters and one new course already available for download.

The multiplayer options include simultaneous four-player rounds locally (eight players online), with 50-player online tournaments also on offer. The lobby system is rendered in 3D, and you can walk around and chat to other players before hitting the links. If this is a taste of what PlayStation Home might offer, we can see the potential already.

— Michael Butler



■ "Stay away, or you'll pay, listen... to what I say"

HOLE IN ONE

Known as *Minna no Golf* in Japan and *Hot Shots Golf* in the US, the *Everybody's Golf* series began on the original PlayStation, way back in 1997. This PS3 version is the fifth in the main sequence of games; there have also been two PSP versions and two Japan-only PSP versions. The first of these is GPS-enabled and allows you to play on real-world golf courses; the second is a rare version sponsored by Coke, given away as a promotional prize with Coke-labelled PSPs.



PROS:

■ Easy to play, yet difficult to master... kinda

CONS:

■ Could do with more courses and customisation...

VERDICT: Continues the series' fine tuned balance between accessibility and depth.

OFFICIAL
SCORE:

07

Love your gadgets? Get your daily fix at



gadgetzone

- ▶ Mobile phones
- ▶ MP3 players
- ▶ Digital cameras
- ▶ Home cinema
- ▶ Computers
- ▶ And all the latest tech toys!

GadgetZone is Australia's new home for gadget junkies, brought to you by the teams behind T3: The Gadget Magazine and Windows Vista: The Official Magazine.

Visit us daily to get the latest news, in-depth reviews, expert opinion and the chance to win loads of great prizes.

www.gadgetzone.com.au

PS3 PS2 PSP REVIEW

■ **GENRE:** ACTION
■ **RELEASE:** NOW
■ **DEVELOPER:** SIERRA
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** VIVENDI

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-2
■ **PRICE:** \$49.95
■ **HD:** 576i
■ **WEB:** www.sierra.com

■ "Oh I say! Jolly good! What a ripper, etc."



SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES

Trust us, uncontrollable Brownies are a problem....

Licensed games – their reputation is so bad that whenever we hear the phrase it causes our eyes to automatically roll. At least, we thought that was the cause, until an optometrist informed us that we're suffering from retina retardation from playing too many games. Anyway, *Spiderwick Chronicles* bucks the usual licensed game curse by offering up a decent fantasy experience that could be another page straight out of the Jumanji-esque magical book of the movie 'Arthur Spiderwick's Field Guide to the Fantastical World Around You'.

Playing as Mallory, Jared or Simon, the game is a mixture of exploration, fetch quests, and assaulting magical

beings with baseball bats – good times. There are also a number of surprisingly cool mini-games to participate in, and navigating some of the platforming sections using a 'rat-man' brownie can take a surprising degree of skill.

Graphically the game is acceptable, and the musical score from the movie has been employed and sounds fantastic. The

voice acting can be a bit spotty in places – with Jared sometimes sounding like an 'Anakin Skywalker speak-and-spell'. But this does little to detract from the fact that *Spiderwick Chronicles* does a great job of recreating the fantasy feel of the original novels and the new movie, and it's well worth a thrash if you're a fan of either.

Adam Mathew

PROS:

- Decent graphics
- Enthralling fantasy storyline

CONS:

- Combat can get repetitive
- Some levels are confusing

VERDICT: A stand-up action adventure romp. Isn't necessarily a game for fairies.

OFFICIAL
SCORE:

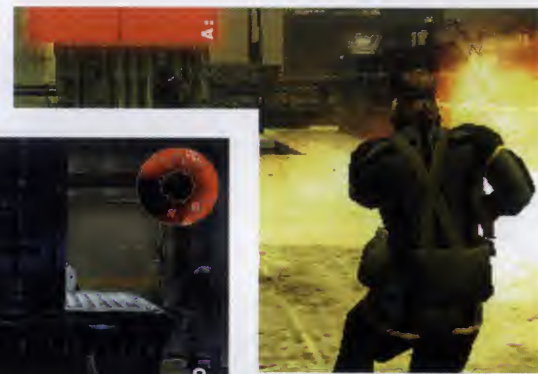
07

■ The goblin was on a righteous mission to destroy all Harry Potter clones, one by one.

PS3 PS2 PSP REVIEW

■ **GENRE:** STEALTH
■ **RELEASE:** NOW
■ **DEVELOPER:** KOJIMA
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ATARI

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-6
■ **PRICE:** \$49.95
■ **GAMESHARE:** YES
■ **WEB:** www.konami.jp



METAL GEAR SOLID PORTABLE OPS +

"...call me Snaaaake"

After shuffling the deck in its first few forays into PSP territory, the *Metal Gear* franchise was looking a bit worse for wear. All that changed a year ago when *Portable Ops* hit our shores. Great mechanics, silky smooth looks, solid multiplayer, she had it all, the community rejoiced, and all was right with the world. So where does the sequel figure in all this? Does it raise the bar, or rest on its laurels?

As soon as the first loading screen drops you get hit with the bonus plan. Customised characters from the original can be imported into the sequel. Simple, direct and awesome for those *Gear*-heads out there, who had invested the time into tweaking their unit to a sharp strike force in the first outing.

The basics are still the same, sneak here, choke this dude, hide the body, avoid detection here, rescue that dude, you know, the usual stuff. Stealth take-downs are still a bit fiddly, but overall the controls handle quite well especially the switch between third and first person views when aiming/firing weapons.

The big boss battles return, and you can acquire Old Snake and Raiden as you progress. The coolest addition

is undoubtedly the 'Infinity Mission' in single player. Here you go up against increasingly difficult adversaries to acquire more powerful weapons, and recruit specialised operatives.

Ultimately, it's not quite the most complete *MGS* experience out there, (and it's prequel, which still totally trumps this one, is a better option) but it's an affordable jump off for first timers.

Dave Kozicki

PROS:

- Import your unit
- Recruit over 200 soldiers!!

CONS:

- No real plot to speak of
- Not a big improvement

VERDICT: More an expansion pack than a true sequel – a leaner version of *MGS Portable Ops*.

OFFICIAL
SCORE:

07

■ George Lucas is gonna sue somebody...



■ **GENRE:** RACING
■ **RELEASE:** NOW
■ **DEVELOPER:** SIX BY NINE
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ACTIVISION

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-8
■ **PRICE:** \$69.95
■ **GAMESHARE:** YES
■ **WEB:** www.bugbear.fi

PS3 PS2 PSP REVIEW

FLATOUT HEAD-ON

Kentucky Fried Racing in your hands

This one looked good on paper. Destruction Derbies on call, *Dukes of Hazards*-esque road racing, fatal stunt shows, and multiplayer as a pearly cherry on top sounded like a dish that'd get Paris Hilton eating. Why then are we steering you good folk away from *FlatOut Head-On*?

It's infected – that's why. Plagued by that damn frickin' affliction that ruins many a PSP racer, the cars of *FlatOut Head-On* control like concussed shopping trolleys. Obviously this isn't going to be a call-your-mamma issue when it comes to revving up for the Destruction Derbies and Carnage Races – which in turn are the redeeming sparkplugs in *FlatOut's* bonnet – but when you start turboing through races it's a total downer. When you factor

in a countable frame rate, the nuts and bolts of this speed-eater become brothel-house loose.

Even the usually Fonzie stunt mode can't escape without collateral damage. For those who don't know, *FlatOut's* stunt modes see you fang a rocket-powered car down a track and brake to launch an unharnessed victim out your windscreen and through fiery rings, ten pins – whatever. It's macabre, sure, but we're weird guys and we dig it. Trouble is, with such crapola controls, setting up for a record-crushing chuck is the gaming equivalent of passing gallstones.

Nope, even with snazzy Ad Hoc and party multiplayer treats, *FlatOut Head-On* plays like it's driving with a flat tyre.

— James Ellis

PROS:

- Stout multiplayer support
- Destruction Derbies are fun

CONS:

- Abominable controls
- *Burnout Legends*

VERDICT: The tight swag of modes can't bolster the snail-like controls.

OFFICIAL
SCORE:

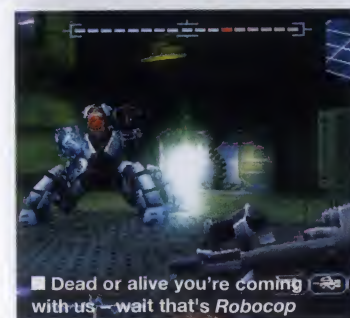
05



■ **GENRE:** FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER
■ **RELEASE:** NOW
■ **DEVELOPER:** KONAMI
■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ATARI

■ **PLAYERS:** 1-8
■ **PRICE:** \$79.95
■ **GAMESHARE:** NO
■ **WEB:** www.konami-data.com/

PS3 PS2 PSP REVIEW



CODED ARMS: CONTAGION

...ain't got no legs

If you were one of the few who played the first *Coded Arms*, you would agree that it didn't exactly set the world on fire. To be fair, near launch titles are rarely revolutionary or awe inspiring, and it certainly was a flawed creation. That said, it was engaging enough. The whole cyberpunk and hacking themes were cool and different, though the controls didn't quite get the job done, leaving the whole experience lacking a certain something.

Those pesky cyber-terrorists are back with their weapons of mass destruction and what not. They've distributed a virus and you're trapped in the virtual system until you destroy it. Time to give them a

royal spanking and free the virtual world from their tyranny and all that.

Coded Arms: Contagion features an impressive new arsenal of weapons both conventional and energy based, the cut scenes look fantastic, and the overall look and feel is tight, except for the hacking... which does, and always has, sucked balls. The real problem lies

with the movement via the face buttons. You'll never react as quickly as with a dual thumbsticks and it loses that tangible feeling of intensity.

We're not sure if any first-person shooter is ever really going to leave its mark on the PSP. The issue of the missing second analogue stick just cannot be avoided. — Dave Kozicki

PROS:

- Unique look
- Nice array of weapons

CONS:

- Hacking sucks
- Controls frustrate

VERDICT: A solid concept executed as well as can be expected.

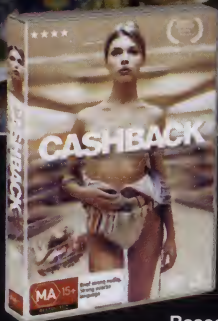
OFFICIAL
SCORE:

06

DVD, Blu-ray and Cinema

FILM

Time stands still in *Cashback*, Timothy Olyphant scores a hit with *Hitman*, Russell Crowe cracks the case in *American Gangster*, Jason Statham kicks off in *Rogue Assassin* and much, much more!



DVD OF THE MONTH

CASHBACK (MA15+)

STARRING: Sean Biggerstaff, Emilia Fox, Shaun Evans, Michelle Ryan, Stuart Goodwin, Michael Dixon
DIRECTOR: Sean Ellis

Based on his own short film, *Cashback* is director Sean Ellis' first feature-length flick and it's more than up to scratch. When art student Ben Willis breaks up with his girlfriend Suzy he develops a severe case of insomnia once he finds he isn't really over her. Instead of lying awake at night he lands a gig at a local supermarket working the late shift - this way he can pass the time and get paid while he's at it. He meets a host of colourful characters, all of whom have their own art to dealing with the boredom associated with an eight-hour shift. Ben's, however, is far more amazing than scooter races down the isles - he inexplicably

develops the ability to freeze time. As an artist, Ben has an innate appreciation of this frozen world (particularly the women within it) and begins to spend a great deal of time in it. He mostly partially undresses the female shoppers and sketches them. As things progress, Ben finds himself smitten with quiet checkout girl Sharon, who may just be the solution to his insomnia. Guy meets girl, guy draws girl with her top unbuttoned, guy gets girl. Typical stuff.

We a tad confused though, as all the gear we read on *Cashback* says Ben imagines himself stopping time. There's nothing about any of the scenes where he freezes time,

however, that suggest he's simply imagining it - unless he's also imaging the injuries he's causing to his boss and the sketches of nude supermarket shoppers he's churning out.

VERDICT: Exceedingly odd and packed with gratuitous nudity, *Cashback* is a quirky yet cute romantic comedy with a real twist. Interesting characters, a wonderfully unique premise and a bevy of boobs make it a must-see.

★★★★★



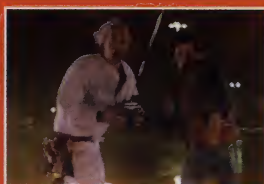
THE BEST TIME MEDDLERS... OF ALL TIME

"We've got to go back, Marty!" "Where Doc?!" "Back, to the future!"



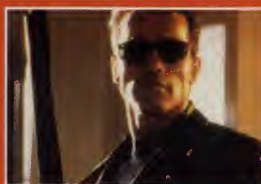
BILL AND TED

Two slackers travel through time in a special phone booth in order to assemble a posse of historical figures for their high school history presentation. God gave rock and roll to them



MARTY McFLY AND DOC BROWN

This pair travel back and forward in time in a De Lorean time-machine thanks to the wonders of the flux capacitor (it's what makes time-travel possible!)



THE TERMINATOR

The first is sent back in time to kill Sarah Connor, and the second is sent back to save her ten-year-old son, John. We don't count the third because it's a bit shit, and its muscles are saggy.



HIRO

Nerdy Asian star of the current TV flavour-of-the-month, *Heroes*. Hiro has the ability to manipulate time in a number of ways, including freezing it for an extended period. YADA!



ASH

He and his Oldsmobile are sucked into some kind of time portal and end up in a medieval land around 1300AD, fighting an evil version of himself. Yeah, it's a comedy.

SCI-FI

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR REQUIEM (MA15+)

■ **STARRING:** Steven Pasquale, Reiko Aylesworth, John Ortiz
■ **DIRECTOR:** Colin Strause



You may be looking at the list of above actors thinking, "Who the frack are these guys?" So were we. Not to detract from the *Alien vs. Predator* theme, a cast of twenty-something unknowns have been thrown in as cannon fodder between these warring extra terrestrials. It plays out like *AvP* versus the cast of *The O.C.* and is strangely satisfying watching each cast member get eviscerated. The downside is that the acting is atrocious and not a single character leaves a slight impression on the audience.

■ **VERDICT:** It's a real pity that the weakest link in the film was the actors. The special effects were cool, and there were some killer fight scenes, but the human aspect never got close to engaging.

★★

DRAMA

AMERICAN GANGSTER (MA15+)

■ **STARRING:** Denzel Washington, Russell Crowe, Cuba Gooding, Jr., Chiwetel Ejiofor, Josh Brolin, Carla Gugino, RZA
■ **DIRECTOR:** Ridley Scott



Academy Award winners Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe team up with superstar director Ridley Scott for this 1970s crime epic. When his boss suddenly dies, Frank Lucas (Washington) goes from a quiet driver to Harlem's leading black crime boss - eventually going on to dominate the drug scene in New York, above even the Mafia. Richie Roberts (Crowe), an honest cop, is on his case and once the destinies of these two men become intertwined nothing will be the same again. Inspired by a true story.

■ **VERDICT:** A great cast and a terrific tale, superbly told. The only real problem is the usually dependable Russell Crowe's strange habit of making an NYC cop sound Australian.

★★★★

KIDS

BEE MOVIE (G)

■ **STARRING:** Jerry Seinfeld, Renee Zellweger, Matthew Broderick
■ **DIRECTOR:** Simon J. Smith



This comedy has its wings pulled off and comes hurtling to the ground with very little impact. It makes you wonder how much influence Larry David had on Seinfeld's body of work, as this is tripe at its best/worst. A solid idea of bees suing humans for "stealing" their honey is a great one, but the end result is lacklustre with very little sting. Even a great cast of side characters, with Patrick Warburton and John Goodman sweetening the pot, do little to distract you from the substandard performance of the lead actors.

■ **VERDICT:** The five lines that Chris Rock's has steals the movie as the remainder slips from your memory. Seinfeld should go back and fall asleep on his bed of crisp \$1000 bills rather than throw out this sort of garbage.

★★

I AM LEGEND (MA15+)

■ **DIRECTOR:** Francis Lawrence
■ **STARRING:** Will Smith, Alice Braga, Dash Mihok



The first half of this movie rocks the spot, but kinda goes downhill towards an ending that will make you rip out your pubic hair in frustration. Some truly hair raising moments almost save this one from the doldrums.

■ **VERDICT:** A wasted opportunity. Some great scenes, but a lame ending.

★★★

THE RECRUIT (M)

■ **DIRECTOR:** Roger Donaldson
■ **STARRING:** Al Pacino, Colin Farrell



A brilliant computer science student is recruited by the CIA, although he quickly realises that no one can be trusted and that nothing is what it seems.

■ **VERDICT:** A serviceable thriller.

★★★

WYATT EARP (M)

■ **DIRECTOR:** Lawrence Kasdan
■ **STARRING:** Kevin Costner, Dennis Quaid, Gene Hackman, David Andrews, Linden Ashby, Jeff Fahey, Joanna Going



A semi-biographical film about the life of wild west lawman Wyatt Earp. Takes you from his early years through to his later years.

■ **VERDICT:** Good, but it's no *Tombstone*.

★★★

WALL STREET (M)

■ **DIRECTOR:** Oliver Stone
■ **STARRING:** Michael Douglas, Charlie Sheen, Martin Sheen, Daryl Hannah



Greed is good, and so to is this movie. One of Michael Douglas's best performance and Charlie Sheen's only good performance.

■ **VERDICT:** One of the best movies about the '80s ever.

★★★★



DESPITE THE FACT THAT TIMOTHY OLYPHANT NAILED THE LOOK AND CHARACTER OF AGENT 47 IN HITMAN - HE ACTUALLY NEVER PLAYED ANY OF THE GAMES THEMSELVES. APPARENTLY THE SCRIPT ITSELF WAS ENOUGH FOR OLYPHANT TO CREATE THE CHARACTER.

ACTION

BEOWULF (MA)

■ **STARRING:** Ray Winstone, Anthony Hopkins, John Malkovich, Angelina Jolie
■ **DIRECTOR:** Robert Zemeckis



Words cannot not express what a visual treat this was, yet the biggest surprise was how much care was taken in weaving the story. The CG is as

photo realistic as you can get nowadays with each actor's animated counterpart emoting through every scene brilliantly. Hopkins is fantastic as the drunken king who fathered the beast, Malkovich is the perfect seedy little advisor planting seeds on doubt in his ear and Winstone pulls off the role of champion with great bravado and bluster. What of Angelina you ask? She's bringing sexy back, in a big way.

■ **VERDICT:** A brash retelling of a classic tale that looks as sexy as Megan Fox and Jessica Alba getting it on. To be honest, we pity those of you who missed out on this in 3D at the IMAX. Fantastic.

★★★★

ACTION

HITMAN (MA15+)

■ **STARRING:** Timothy Olyphant, Olga Kurylenko, Dougray Scott
■ **DIRECTOR:** Xavier Gens



They certainly got the 'look' and tone of *Hitman* in the big screen version, if not the stealth aspects. The story is some twaddle involving Prime Ministers and doppelgangers... who cares? Just bring on the action. The notion of the assassin for hire flies out the window in favour of larger, more explosive set pieces. Olyphant grimaces through clenched jaws and handles the role of Agent 47 well enough, but Olga Kurylenko's talents are the real show stoppers and has us at full attention (and by talents, we mean jugs).

■ **VERDICT:** Though seriously flawed, we really tried to hate this film, but the slick direction, inventive action sequences and extreme hotness of Olga Kurylenko made it difficult to resist. Call it a guilty pleasure... and don't judge us!

★★★★

ACTION

ROGUE ASSASSIN (MA15+)

■ **STARRING:** Jet Li, Jason Statham and Devon Aoki
■ **DIRECTOR:** Phillip G. Atwell



After the death of his partner, an FBI Agent (Statham) is in hot pursuit of a mysterious assassin called 'Rogue'. His name is Rogue, and he's an assassin - how do they come up with this stuff? The chase launches the flick into tense fire-fights, numerous chases and the prerequisite kung fu antics. It's nice to see Li and Statham go head to head (especially with Statham's martial arts prowess, which still has not been fully utilised) and there are several interesting, if not predictable, twists along the way. The harsher tone works quite well, though the film wraps up a little quickly.

■ **VERDICT:** After their substandard team up in *The One*, we felt this may redeem the partnership. While it's not a must see, it certainly is a step in the right direction. Save it for a rainy day...

★★★



■ You can tell he eats Nutri-grain

CINEMA

IRON MAN (RATING TBC)

■ **DIRECTOR:** Jon Favreau
 ■ **STARRING:** Robert Downey, Jr., Terrence Howard, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jeff Bridges

When looking for someone to play the alcoholic, sex-addict philanthropist lead of Tony Stark, Jon Favreau thought he needed someone who could completely and utterly identify with the role. So who better than 'reformed' wild child Robert Downey, Jr. to get all method on our arses for? (In fact we believe he said it's Rob or no-one) Following in the footsteps of many below par superhero performances, *Iron Man* is looking set to outshine them all. We love the design, tone and that Favreau embraced the old school (or "Golden Age" for fat, geeky, comic aficionados) look, as well as the super sleek modern incarnations. This is going to be so eff-ing money, and it bloody well knows it! (We just hope Gwyneth 'Mrs. Coldplay' Paltrow kicks the bucket at some point, that would make it even more awesome!)

Opens May 1



COMING SOON

SPEED RACER (TBC)

■ **STARRING:** Emile Hirsch
 Speed, a gifted young racer, is trying to win The Crucible, a cross-country race that claimed the life of his brother. Set against a neon futuristic backdrop, can one driver change the fate of the world? Based on the 1960s cartoon series.

Opens June 12

DON'T MESS WITH ZOHAN (TBC)

■ **STARRING:** Adam Sandler
 When you've been operating as a commando in one of the most war torn centres of the world, what would you do for a little change of pace? Zohan fakes his own death to escape military service in the land of Zion, to come to America and follow his lifelong dream of becoming... a hair stylist?

Opens June 19

HANCOCK (TBC)

■ **STARRING:** Will Smith
 Shattering the Superman Boy Scout superhero mould to pieces, Hancock is a loser and the worst kind of hero. With a drinking problem and surly attitude, he usually causes more damage in his wake as he attempts various "rescues".

Opens July 3

BUZZ

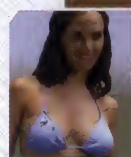
The latest movie murmurs from home and abroad



THE SAINTS

Since pissing off Hollywood with his prima donna antics after making cult hit, *The Boondock Saints*, OPS is overjoyed to announce

writer/director Troy Duffy is back with vengeance with *The Boondock Saints: All Saints Day*. Sean Patrick Flanery and Billy Connolly will all reprise their roles from the original about a baptised modern day trio of avenging angels who deal death to the wicked in the Lord's name.



OH BABY!

After being twice bitten on the ass by idiot TV executives who cancelled both *Angel* and *Firefly*, Joss Whedon has decided to give it

another go with *Dollhouse*. The show centres around a group of covert operatives who are implanted with fake memories to help them complete their missions, and then wiped clean until the next. With Eliza Dushku headlining, we're hoping this legendary scribe is given the time and freedom to develop this intriguing story before it gets culled for some new reality TV show crap.



SEE YOU IN HELL...

After messing with our heads in *Pan's Labyrinth* Guillermo Del Toro is bringing that, smart-arse, big arse, kick-arse,

monster-bashing behemoth of demonic pain, *Hellboy*, back for another round. *Hellboy II: The Golden Army* tells of a spill over of beasts from the spiritual world to our realm, and it's up to our horny devil to lay the smack down. This bad boy is looking like a visual masterpiece with some crazy kung fu antics provided by chief villain, Prince Nuada (Matt Goss) and the usual wisecracking shenanigans by our sunburnt hero Hellboy (Ron Perlman). Expect it to hit cinemas screens late August.



JOHNNY 5 IS ALIVE!

We've heard that the feel good hit *Short Circuit* is getting the 2008 treatment. It centres on a robot built by the military to be a weapon that develops a conscience after being struck by lightning, and focuses its efforts on peace rather than the violence it was created for.



AMERICAN GANGSTER

Win a \$3,000 made-to-measure suit!

There are two sides to the American dream ... *American Gangster* is based on the true story of Frank Lucas, a heroin kingpin from Harlem who defied the might of the Italian mafia and became one of the biggest drug dealers in the country, and the detective who worked to bring him down.

To celebrate the release of *American Gangster*, which is available to rent or buy from May 14, BLOCKBUSTER®, in conjunction with Universal Pictures Australia, is giving you the chance to win a \$3,000 made-to-measure suit!

**For entry details pick up a copy of InterAction
from your local BLOCKBUSTER® store.**



INTERACTION

Codes, hints, tips, unlockables and more!

TIPS & CHEATS

WARHAWK TIPS AND TACTICS

Now listen up you maggots! It's come to our attention that some of you candy asses have yet to join the fight. What are ya, a bunch of sissies? Your mommas aren't here to wipe your behinds! Good old Sergeant Hulka is here to make you a lean mean fighting machine. So listen up and listen good you pasty-faced piles of puke. Sarge is gonna hold your hands and give you a little basic training in vehicles, weapons and tactics so no matter which side you're fighting on, you'll be of some use for the three seconds you're around before you kick the bucket. Now sound off like you've got a pair! Atten hut!

BRING ME BACK TO LIFE

Now it's no-where near as glamorous as capturing the flag, but in any game type, be it Zones, CTP, Death-match, whatever, re-spawn points are vital. Sure, you grab a coupla points for the cause, but more importantly, you can keep up the offensive. The more you take, the more you box the enemy in, and once they're down to their last few re-spawn points you can move in for the kill. Alternately, if you're on the losing side, recapturing the right point can divide the enemy forces and you can go on the offensive.



ETIQUETTE

We all know where the enemy is going to drop in, everyone has it on the map, but some of you douche bags out there just camp out at re-spawn points in a tank, and blast people as they materialise. That is super-duper Liberace gay, and we're not going to sugar coat it. Yes, we know it's war, yes we understand it's survival of the fittest, but at least make it a contest. Satan has the seventh tier of Hell reserved for all of you, it's unsportsmanlike and screams of a weak player who can't man up to the challenge. (Same goes for hosts who kick players out of matches for being too damn good. We're not boasting, but it has happened to us more times than you'd expect, and usually by a Seppo).



HONK IF YOU'RE HORNY

Please, please, please remember people it's all about teamwork. If you're in a tank or jeep and you see a brother or sister legging it, pull over and at least beep the horn to give them a chance to jump aboard. It's nothing but a bonus. You've got a gunner, you retake spawn points at twice the speed, and it's invaluable in Capture the Flag. If we see another tool jump into a dropship by HIMSELF we're going to neck ourselves. You can fit seven brothers in arms into that bad boy, plus the six turrets and missile launchers, and you want to run with it all on your own? Shame on you!



WATCH YOUR BACK!

The most important lesson of all, cover your mates. This is a TEAM sport. We know we're hammering the point home, but so many people just don't get it. All the info you'll ever need is displayed in the top left corner. Your team got the flag? Jump in a plane and give him some air support by knocking out those on his trail, the same works on the other end. Run down anyone with your flag, or better still, take some time out and defend. By operating in the middle of the action (offensively or defensively) you gain points quicker for assists and can often change the complexion of the battle in your favour swiftly.

IT'S ALL MINES BABY!!

These pint-sized pockets of death can really change the state of play if you use them wisely. In the air, a savvy pilot will drop a mine just as they've grabbed a power up. Most enemies don't realise until it's too late. "Hey, I'm on my last legs and really need that health... almost there... OH SNAP..." KABLAMMO! Be inventive with it, mine planes, even flags and spawn points, which is a particularly nasty turn to retake a point and you done get blown up. One clever little scamp threw eight mines onto a jeep, jumped in and drove around our base until he ran into a group of defenders and sent them to the next re-spawn point. Genius!



HOP, SKIP AND A JUMP

As much as we all like taking to the skies and indulging in some *Top Gun* aerial antics, unless you're playing Death-match, you ain't gonna get alotta points. Get the handle on your hovering and you can use your plane to speedily hop from spawn point to point. Zip in, land, steal a point, jump back in and shoot off into the wild blue yonder. You can give your team a huge tactical advantage if you think about more than just blasting away that bandit on your tail, and take the time to look at the big picture.



DATABASE

All the games that matter on PS3!

FUTURE WATCH

The PS3 games to grab in the coming months

SAINTS ROW 2

Release: Late 2008

Sexy graphics, customisable characters and co-op play. That's it. That's all we're going to say about it. It's like GTA with a buddy. Bust caps back to back or offer sniper support from a distance. It's almost like your girlfriend and her best friend have invited you for an epic three way – you're getting the best of both worlds. What else do you need to know? Oh, the actual game! Check out our preview on page 32.

MERCENARIES 2: WORLD IN FLAMES

Release: Late 2008

You dig an open world, massive destruction, the gun for hire philosophy and the smell of napalm in the morning? How about jacking Apache 'copters mid air, tearing up the streets in muscle cars, or lobbing a couple grenades into a tank, and, oh yeah, we almost forgot, you get to blow shit up. Seriously, where do we sign up?

SOUL CALIBUR IV

Release: Late 2008

It's got the best breast physics any red-blooded male could ask for, an eclectic group of warriors each with their own unique weapons and fighting style, it's probably the most balanced fight out there, and... oh who cares, YOU GET TO

PLAY AS FRICKIN' DARTH VADER!!!!

Hoo boy... (deep breaths) We think if you read closely between the lines, we you might just see our point.

FALLOUT 3

Release: Late 2008

So those maestros who brought you the joy that was *Oblivion* are back for another round in the exact same genre, offering up a sumptuous feast of post apocalyptic RPG goodness with all the trimmings. Damn, that sounds finger lickin' good. The choices you make for good or for evil will shape the fallout-ridden world. Man o'man are we hungry for this one!

xxxx
xxxx

PS3 TOP 20

- 1** **ASSASSIN'S CREED**
A landmark in gaming history. Nothing short of awe-inspiring. The missions are samey, but navigating open-worlds will never be the same. The biggest leap since *GTAIII*.
10
- 2** **UNCHARTED: DRAKE'S FORTUNE**
The best PlayStation exclusive on the market and the best looking console game to date. Frankly, *Uncharted* rocks up to the party and just plain owns everything...
10
- 3** **CALL OF DUTY 4**
Relentlessly exciting. Includes a dizzying variety of combat scenarios and stacks of bleeding-edge military hardware. You'd have to be insane, or a girly-man, to miss it.
10
- 4** **ROCK BAND**
The best party game ever and a triumph in every department, with a killer set list and rad instruments. You wanted the best; you got the best – *Rock Band* rocks.
10
- 5** **MOTORSTORM**
Fast, hard, dirty and utterly exhilarating, *MotorStorm* is essential for everyone's PS3. Not even the lack of split-screen can detract from this fantastic racer.
10
- 6** **RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN**
The perfect launch title for PS3, and possibly the best console FPS ever made. The massive 40-player online deathmatches are more fun than you can imagine.
10
- 7** **THE ELDER SCROLLS IV: OBLIVION**
One of the deepest adventures we've ever laid eyes on. Simply put – awesome. This is arguably the only RPG you'll need for some time to come.
10
- 8** **SKATE**
A groundbreaking title that resets the bar for sports games in general. It kickflips *Tony Hawk's* to the curb with its simple approach. Irresistibly addictive and downright essential.
09
- 9** **WARHAWK**
There is no better multiplayer game on PS3 right now. Tighter than a bull's arse on fight night and smoother than a glass of Guinness, it's a superior piece of software.
09
- 10** **BURNOUT PARADISE**
Despite the lack of the old *Crash Mode*, the overwhelming majority of *Burnout Paradise* rocks harder than Slash during an epic guitar solo. So fast, so wild.
09
- 11** **HEAVENLY SWORD**
Heavenly Sword is one of the best games we've seen in ages. A beautiful, yet deep, masterpiece and an awesomely enjoyable ride, albeit a rather short one.
09
- 12** **GUITAR HERO III**
Captures everything perfect about *Guitar Hero* with the best tracklist yet, but very nearly spoiled it all with the ridiculous new Battle Mode.
09
- 13** **COLIN McRAE DIRT**
Colin McRae DIRT is an ambitious, accessible racer with a surprising amount of depth. The best rally sim ever? You better believe it. Rest in peace big guy.
09
- 14** **THE DARKNESS**
Tentacles and guns – the perfect combination. Stunning, original and gory as hell. You'd have to be dim to miss *The Darkness*.
09
- 15** **STUNTMAN: IGNITION**
The vehicular equivalent of a 10-hour-long orgasm. Gentlemen, start your boners. *Stuntman: Ignition* succeeds in upending the original in every way.
09
- 16** **RATCHET & CLANK FUTURE: TOOLS OF DESTRUCTION**
The biggest, wildest, most interesting, varied and downright gool ol' fashioned fun adventure these two have been part of.
09
- 17** **THE ORANGE BOX**
A stellar package; ripe, in season and packed full of vitamin value. If there isn't one title here that does it for you your gaming license is null and void.
09
- 18** **TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX VEGAS**
This Vegas adventure is definitely worth a look. A slick, gorgeous, accessible and utterly entertaining tactical shooter.
08
- 19** **CONDEMNED 2**
Takes everything that's good about an FPS and drags it, kicking and screaming, into a survival horror paradigm. Gripping stuff and well worth the price of admission.
09
- 20** **SINGSTAR**
SingStar will rule Friday nights for the foreseeable future. Should last as long as the PS3 does providing Sony pulls its finger out with more downloadable tracks.
08

PS3

ARMORED CORE 4 7

A far better alternative to *Mobile Suit Gundam*.

BEOWULF 6

Has the dubious honour of ticking every game cliché.

BLADESTORM: THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR 6

A solid mix of genres wrapped in an intriguing tale.

BLAZING ANGELS II: SECRET MISSIONS OF WWII 6

Not quite the ace of aces at this stage.

CALL OF DUTY 3 7

A solid but surprisingly unspectacular shooter.

CLIVE BARKER'S JERICHO 6

Sick and twisted but not enough variety.

THE CLUB 8

Compulsive and fun – one club you should join.

CONAN 7

A bulldog of bloodletting, savage adventure and boobies.

DEVIL MAY CRY 4 7

A worthy entry into the series but the backtracking spoils it.

DEF JAM: ICON 8

Somehow it's won its way into our hearts. Stupid fun.

THE EYE OF JUDGEMENT 5

Impressive tech, but it's still a \$160 card game.

F.E.A.R. 8

A chilling ride but the graphics are a bit of a shocker.

FIFA 08 8

Finally puts *FIFA* on level terms with *Pro Evolution*.

FIFA STREET 3 7

The saviour for your multiplayer soul. Simple but fun.

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3 8

Boasts visuals that will knock the teeth out of you.

FOLKLORE 8

Great graphics, memorable characters. A sweet surprise.

FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES 7

Brims with potential but fails to live up to it.

GENJI: DAYS OF THE BLADE 5

Plodding gameplay that belongs on the Atari 2600.

THE GODFATHER: THE DON'S EDITION 6

Fine, but do yourself a favour and get the PS2 version.

THE GOLDEN COMPASS 4

Uninspired level design and dull quests make this a chore.

HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX 6

Decent, but its chore-like structure will bore most.

JUICED 2: HOT IMPORT NIGHTS 7

A top bit of racing fluff, although it's all a tad generic.

KANE & LYNCH: DEAD MEN 6

One part *Hitman*, one part Michael Mann; mostly a let down.

LAIR 5

A massive let-down. It feels rushed and unfinished.

LOST PLANET: EXTREME CONDITION 6

Solid enough, but a lazy port and a visual let-down.

5 OF THE GREATEST SINGSTAR TRACKS...



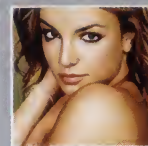
TOTO – AFRICA

It has the high pitched chorus bit, and the laid back verses. When we get on the mic on this bad boy, it's pure emotion, man.



LIONEL RITCHIE – EASY

Easy to sing, makes you look good in front of the ladies, and has that long EEEEEAAAAASY bit at the end...



BRITNEY SPEARS – TOXIC

This may seem like a weird choice from us chaps, but there's something about this song that gets our lungs a pumpin'.



JOHN FARNHAM – YOU'RE THE VOICE

No explanation necessary. This song has the best chorus in history. AHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!



RADIOHEAD – CREEP

The anthem for emos before such a term even existed. In fact, this song is so good/bad it actually invented emos.

MADDEN NFL 08 7

Some great improvements and plenty of modes.

MARVEL: ULTIMATE ALLIANCE 9

Great co-op and an exhaustive list of Marvel's greatest.

MEDAL OF HONOR AIRBORNE 6

A dinosaur of an FPS – wait for *Brothers in Arms* instead.

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: TARGET IN SIGHT 3

A rubber godzilla of a title. What a pipe blocker!

MX VS. ATV UNTAMED 6

Feels like a PS2 port, looks like a PS2 port. Disappointing.

NBA 08 5

Fails to pick a side (sim or arcade) and so fails at both.

NBA 2K8 8

Not as pretty as *LIVE* but has more depth.

NBA LIVE 08 8

Best of its kind. B-ball devotees will adore it, guaranteed.

NBA STREET HOMECOURT 8

The brashest, most addictive arcade basketball game yet.

NEED FOR SPEED CARBON 8

The last *NFS* street racer before the series went legit.

NEED FOR SPEED PROSTREET 8

Great smoke, but more depth would've been nice.

NINJA GAIDEN SIGMA 8

A treasure trove of gaming goodness, super tough.

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END 6

A very shallow slash 'em up. Ye be warned.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2008 8

Still the best soccer in the biz, but the graphics are dire.

SEGA RALLY 7

Not so much a revolution as one hell of a renovation.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 4

Mostly terrible. Avoid at all costs.

STRANGLEHOLD 7

Max Payne inspired action, plenty of frantic fun.

TIMESHIFT 6

A solid time-bender that doesn't quite reach 88mph.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: AW2 8

A tense, realistic shooter, but *Rainbow Six Vegas* is better.

TONY HAWK'S PROVING GROUND 6

Struggles to escape the shadow of *SKATE*.

TUROK 7

Packs plenty of bite but it's missing a few teeth.

UNREAL TOURNAMENT 3 8

Gorgeous and gory, but the lack of split-screen blows.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5 8

As hardcore as fighting games get.

VIRTUA TENNIS 3 8

Some of the best fun four people can have on one PS3.

WWE SMACKDOWN VS. RAW 2008 7

A solid entry. A few new additions but still plays the same.

MAGIC MOMENTS

Great moments in PlayStation history remembered!



THE GAME: *SSX Tricky*
THE CONSOLE: PlayStation 2
THE YEAR: 2001

THE MOMENT: Über tricks. That's right, we said it, and we're not talking about German hookers either. We're talking about über awesome, über spectacular über... err... over-the-top tricks that rocked your world. That's what *SSX Tricky* brought us. Sure, this wasn't the first bit of boarding (skate or snow) that captured our interest, we'd been kick-flipping to the *Tony Hawk* franchise and carving up the slopes in the pure gold that was *Cool Boarders* for ages, but *SSX Tricky* was a different manner of beast. A clichéd ensemble of characters grabbing massive air, crashing through buildings, taking crazy shortcuts and riding ridiculous rails, this diamond in the rough had it all. It was part *Tony Hawk*, part *Burnout* and certified cool. Just when you thought it couldn't get better... über tricks sweetened the deal.

Not only did you have to win three heats to complete each race, but the style and flair you sported on the slopes could be used for a quick boost OR you could build it up and perform an über trick. Grab enough air, flick a shoulder button, hit square and watch the show. Boarders flipped, spun, cart wheeled in mid-air, passed the board through their legs in a series of outrageously over the top manoeuvres that kicked your boost up a notch and sent the crowd into a frenzy. Oh, and it got better. Chain five together during a race and you could perform a 'super' trick (and again, no, it's not a prostitute with super powers), which made the outlandish über moves seem meek in comparison, and it gave you unlimited boost for the duration of the race. The first time we nailed one of those, and boosted all the way to the finish line for the win was hard to forget.

Often imitated, no boarding or skating game has come close to matching the colour, youthful exuberance and straight out fun of *SSX Tricky*. Über tricks, über tracks, über characters... über cool.

*Trivia – Insninac's other famous franchise (Ratchet & Clank) also uses

Taking a look back at the best in the business...

RETROSPECTIVE



THINKING OUTSIDE THE CARDBOARD BOX

Looking back at Metal Gear Solid...

Whether you love it to death, like the majority of humankind, or hate it secretly, in your underground cave with a band of tasteless, mouth-breathing, morlock outcasts – no serious gamer can deny that *Metal Gear Solid* on the PlayStation was a bold proponent of gameplay innovation. Before MGS's release in 1998 most third-person action games of the era were mindless collect-a-thons, fetch-me-that-fests, or blast-o-ramas filled with swarms of semi-retarded automatons who detected you and then attacked relentlessly until you shotgunned them. Sweeping generalisations aside, not many game designers on PSX really dared to offer up any interesting ideas that defied the usual swarm-warfare and ho-hum linearity. But Konami's Hideo 'Big Boss' Kojima had some ideas – a big-arsed cardboard box full of them in fact...

USE STEALTH, SAVE HEALTH

Life in 1998 was very different to today; there were at least two B*Witched singles in the top ten music charts at any one time, and not shooting everybody in a videogame was an utterly alien concept – so much so that the marketing team

for MGS had to slap on the 'zing-worthy' subheading "Tactical Espionage Action". That's right, back before the days of *Splinter Cell* and *Assassin's Creed* folks never really thought about the benefits gained from waiting, watching, and using their noggin to defeat a superior military force. Not only did MGS help solidify this new idea into popular gaming culture, but it also achieved the impossible task of making nondescript cardboard boxes cool, and it helped train a bold new generation of security conscious thieves and peeping toms. Good times...

PIRATE RORTING PUZZLES

Any game that can challenge your intelligence in a new way is an exceptional experience. For example, at some point in MGS you make the acquaintance of Meryl, a comrade who must be contacted via a dedicated Codec channel. It sounds easy enough; apparently you can easily find her codec number on the 'case'. After ten minutes of inventory checking, and another ten minutes of gawking at the TV like your dog does when he hears the barking from the MeatyBites commercials – the shrewd among us thought outside of

the grey PS box and checked the back of the game's packaging to solve the nefarious riddle. Pirates got shafted, amusingly.

ATTACK OF THE PREYING MANTIS

Similar strokes of unconventional genius could be sampled during the boss fight with Psycho Mantis. Being a (psycho) psychic Herr Mantis would 'read your mind' by viewing logged statistics of your deaths and saving habits, plus he'd access your memory card and mentioned any Konami games that had saves present. Not content with this, the psychic showman would then defy the laws of physics by being the first video game character in the history of the world to make a real life object move – your controller placed on the floor with an overload of dualshock vibration. If you tried something like that today, there would probably be lawsuits – stupid, lawsuits.



WE WANT IT NOW – NO, NOW.

As it is with any form of beautiful art, MGS is all about the aforementioned smaller brush strokes. When you intermix these examples with the obviously amazing voice actors who embroil you in an ever deepening plot, with a truly inspired musical score, and some of the most memorable think-on-your-feet decisions and boss encounters in the history of videogames – it's clear to see that while the seed of innovation was planted by the original *Metal Gear* on the MSX2, it really started to bloom in a big way on the PlayStation platform.

And we think that even the *Metal Gear Solid*-hating morlocks are curious to see what unfolds in the newest and fully bloomed *Metal Gear* experience. Roll on number four... 🐍



THE PLAYA HAYTER



Solid Snake is voiced by David Hayter, a multi-talented voice actor who also voiced Captain America in a 1994 Spiderman cartoon series, plus he wrote the screenplay for the first *X-Men* movie.

Word on the street is he also made a cameo appearance in the ill-fated sitcom *Major Dad*, but we won't hold that against him...

ON SALE
NOW!

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO BUILDING YOUR DVD COLLECTION



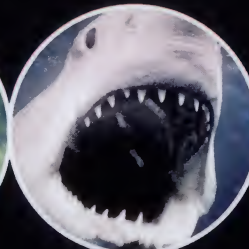
501



DVDs



YOU MUST OWN



EXTRAS | EASTER EGGS | HD DVD | BLU-RAY



NEXT

HANDS ON!

HAZE

TM

Free Radical's ever-delayed
PS3 exclusive put to the test!



- Updates for *TNA IMPACT*, *This Is Vegas*, *LEGO Indiana Jones - The Original Adventures*, *The Bourne Conspiracy* and more!
- Top secret reveal of a sequel you **NEED** to know about!
- Rocking out with *Rock Band*!

PlayStation®
Official Magazine - Australia

ON SALE 28 MAY

AUSTRALIA'S BEST VIDEOGAMES MAG!



HIT THE GAMES INDUSTRY with a Qantm Degree

Qantm College offers Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and Short Courses in:

**Animation • Games Programming
Games Design • Graphic Design
Multimedia • Digital Video Production**

INTAKES IN FEBRUARY, MAY AND SEPTEMBER*

With campuses in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, Qantm College is Australia's best and most innovative creative media educator. With Qantm, you'll get more than just a qualification – you'll get the best possible chance of winning your title in the creative media industries. Our small classes, enthusiastic industry professional teachers and state-of-the-art equipment make sure you will be able to mix it with the heavyweights, in any division. You'll even get your qualification sooner with our fast-track trimester program! So give us a call today and get in the ring. What are you waiting for?



1300 136 933 | www.qantm.com.au

CRICOS Provider Number: QLD: 02689A, NSW: 02852F, VIC: 02837E

* Subject to availability

